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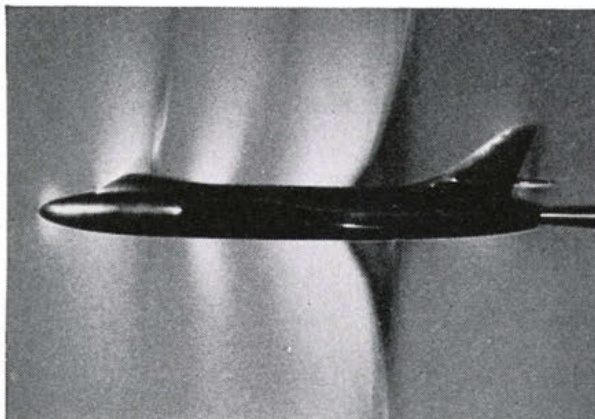
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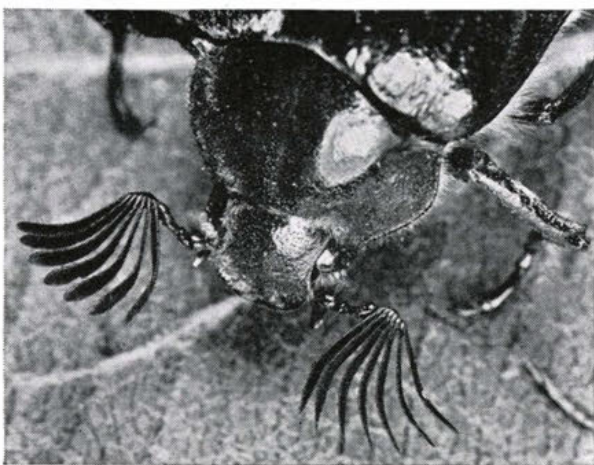
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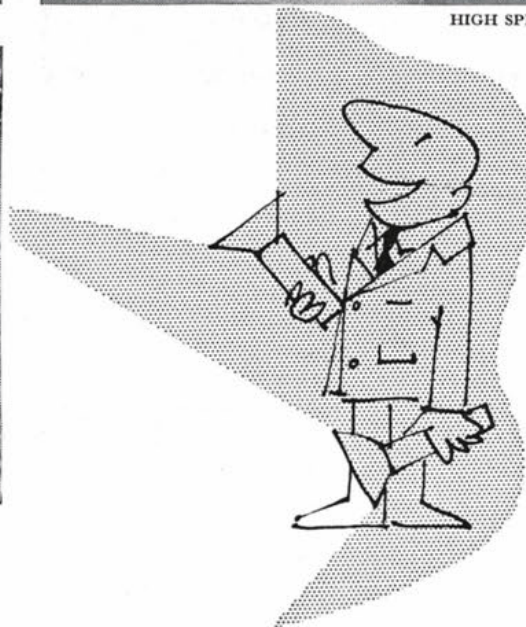
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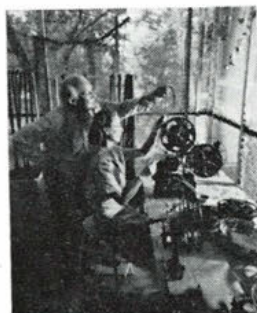
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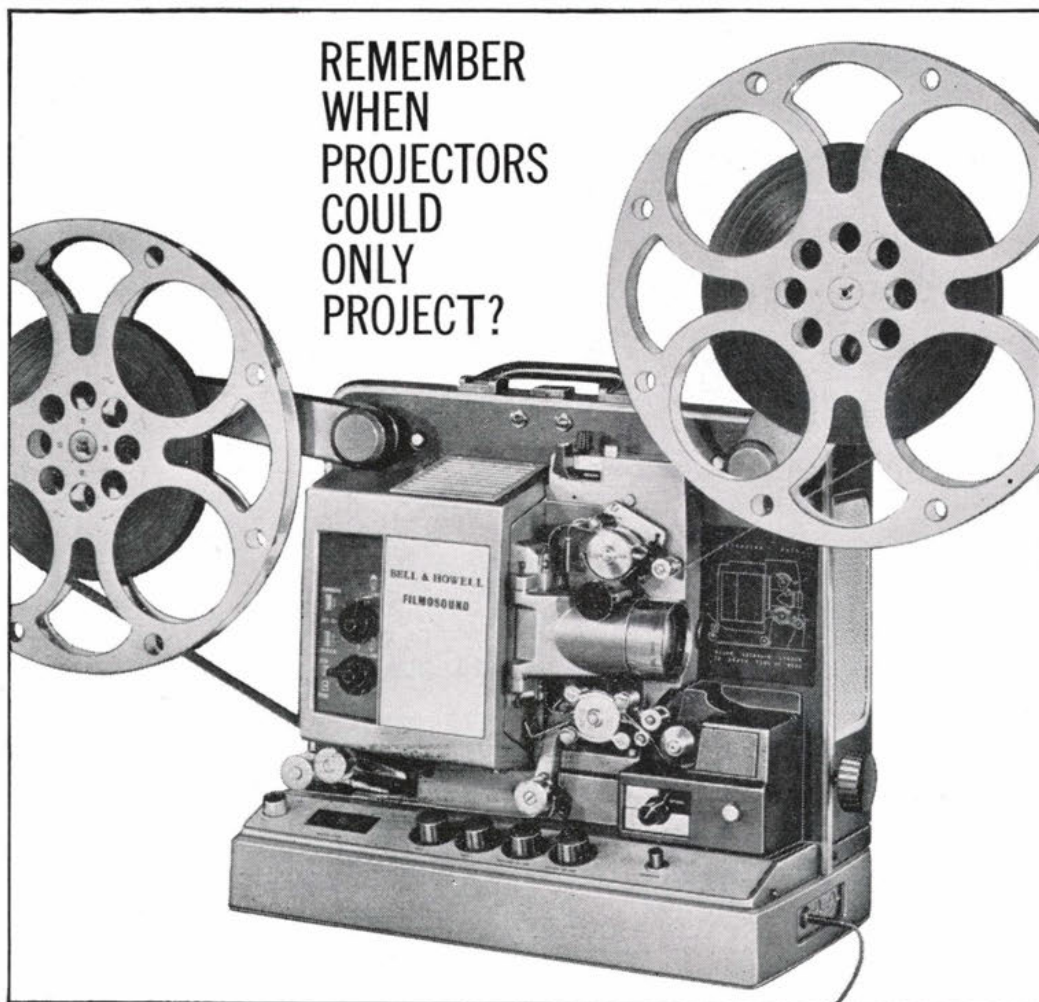
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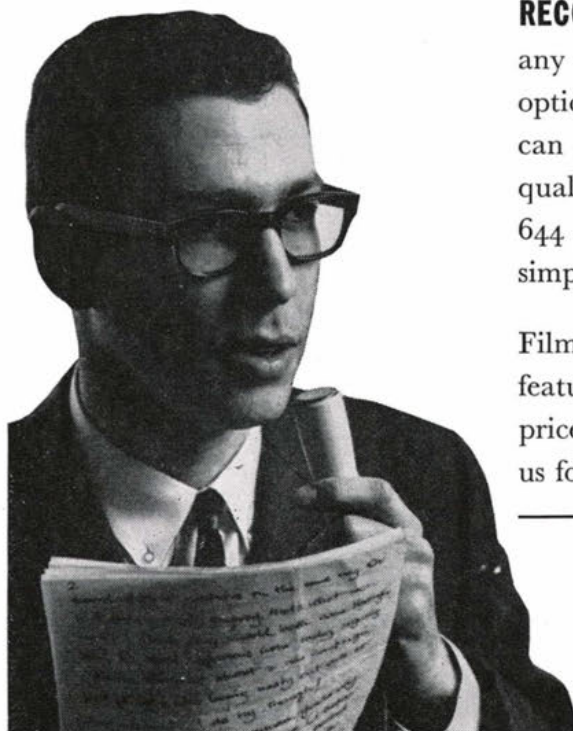
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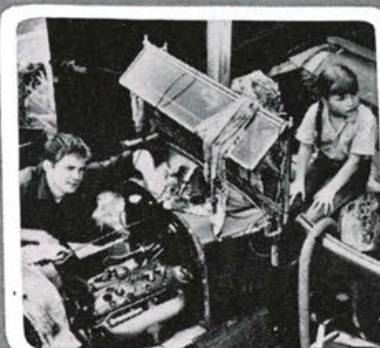
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THE FRONT PAGE

CANNES IN MAY; Boston, San Sebastian, Berlin and Annecy in June; Moscow and Locarno in July; Montreal, Venice and Edinburgh in August: festival-going has become the champion spectator sport of the Sixties. A short closed season still remains around Christmas, but barely time for the resolute festival-goer to pack and unpack between Tours (December) and Rapallo (January). International juries proliferate; Venice awards a lion, Berlin a bear, Locarno a sail; and, as in the caucus race, some festivals less distinguished do their best to see that everyone goes away with a prize.

The international jamboree serves three interests, overlapping but distinct: those of its sponsors, of its professional audience (the people who provide the films, write them up in the press, and make the business deals) and of the amateur, movie-going public. Without the first interest, there would hardly be any festivals; and from the rate at which they are spreading, it is to be assumed that the municipalities which help to foot the hotel bills and pay for the coloured lights and the elegantly uniformed policemen must feel they are getting value for money. From this point of view, a festival remains an out of season attraction for a holiday town. Cannes, it was reported earlier this year, may even find itself transferred from May to February, since in May the hotels no longer find it easy to make room for the extra customers. And in February, no doubt, there would still be enough starlets gamely shivering in bikinis on the Croisette. Now that the old-fashioned star, of the kind who will spend the entire festival under siege in her hotel room, is increasingly hard to come by, it's on those valiant starlets that the conception of glamour depends.

From the professional point of view, a festival offers the cinema an opportunity to put all its wares into the smartest shop window. Mooring their yachts in the harbours of the Mediterranean, concluding deals on the terrace of the Excelsior in Venice or in jam-packed rooms at the Carlton in Cannes, the business entrepreneurs go the rounds. And in the cafés another kind of exchange operates, between the journalists and film-makers who evaluate each other's copy and each other's work. As the supply of films for the feature festivals steadily falls behind the demand, so more specialised gatherings increase in number. Occasions such as Tours and Oberhausen (shorts and documentaries), Annecy (cartoons), Lyons (the *cinéma-vérité* conference held earlier this year) are international gatherings the more valuable because the more genuinely specialised.

For the organiser of the straightforward, competitive festival, however, the whole business must

rapidly become a desperate scramble for the limited supply of authenticated festival films, or a hurried settling for pictures which have already won their complement of prizes elsewhere. Cannes and Venice remain the principal occasions: strategically sited in spring and autumn, at either end of the season, long-established and expertly managed, they command the best. It may be more satisfactory to be prized at San Sebastian or Locarno than an also-ran at Venice, but the producer confident that he has a world-beater will always try to run it in the festival Derby.

Already, when the London Festival was inaugurated almost seven years ago, it was apparent that the scene was becoming dangerously overcrowded and that something different was needed. Partly through choice and partly through force of circumstances, London has been one of the relatively few festivals which concentrates primarily on satisfying its non-professional public. Without much money to spend on show, or on extending invitations to film-makers or the overseas press, it has defined its job in terms of the London filmgoer. Coming at the end of the season in Europe it offers an annual round-up; but because its organisers have also left room for choices of their own, rather than assembling a collection of prize-winners and thereby rubber-stamping jury decisions, this festival sustains its individuality. Rightly or wrongly, the entries reflect a critical taste.

One now has, in effect, four different types of event: the competitive and old-established; the competitive and new; the specialised, ranging from cartoons at Annecy to science fiction at Trieste; and the round-up festival, which will only preserve its character so long as it resists the temptation to get into the prize-giving arena with the rest. Even the more self-conscious industries (Hollywood and our own) are learning the ropes when it comes to the question of what to enter and where to enter it. Now the London idea is being extended, as New York for the first time mounts not exactly the London festival in duplicate, but a festival after the London model. An unusual case of transatlantic collaboration is responsible, with the British Film Institute in London and the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts and the Museum of Modern Art in New York uniting to stage this new event, to be held at the Lincoln Center for ten days from September 10th, 1963. The festival organiser is Richard Roud, who has for several years had the main responsibility for selecting the London festival programmes. Of course there are far too many festivals, but one welcomes the new one none the less readily. Nothing, in the last decade, has done more to advance the commercial cause of specialised cinema.

PENELOPE HOUSTON
TOM MILNE

INTERVIEW WITH

PETER BROOK

ALTHOUGH PETER BROOK has directed only three feature films, his work in the cinema extends over a remarkable range of production conditions. He made an amateur film from Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* while still an undergraduate at Oxford during the war. In 1953 he made his one British picture in orthodox studio conditions: *The Beggar's Opera*, starring Laurence Olivier and produced by Herbert Wilcox. In 1960 he went to France to direct *Moderato Cantabile*, with Jeanne Moreau and Jean-Paul Belmondo. His *Lord of the Flies*, one of the two British entries at this year's Cannes Festival, was shot on an island off Puerto Rico, edited in Paris, and financed (like *The Connection*) by a number of independent backers. The rights in William Golding's novel, originally purchased by Sir Michael Balcon, had passed from him to Sam Spiegel, for whom Brook originally intended to direct the picture, before Spiegel gave up the idea after any number of scripts had been tried and found wanting.

In talking to Peter Brook, we wanted to approach his



ideas about the cinema through these three films and the experiences of making them. We began, consequently, with the British cinema, and by an inevitable extension the theatre in Britain.

DO YOU THINK THAT CRITICS, and perhaps audiences as well, have become too self-conscious about the British cinema? For the last three or four years we have been talking about a breakthrough, questioning each new film as it comes along about how far it measures up to expectations, pulling the cinema up by the roots to see how it's getting on. Does this attitude perhaps put an unfair burden on British film-makers?

No, I don't think so, because there is a real mystery here. We all talk about England's terrible heritage, about how impossible everything is in this country. But at the same time we know, by a piece of double-think, that this is really completely untrue, and that there's a tremendous tradition and fund of intelligence and imagination and originality which has always been there, and which has suddenly come out in a certain form in the theatre. There doesn't seem any reason why it shouldn't take the British cinema way out into all sorts of exciting directions. But in fact it doesn't; and so we have, I think, to go on hoping and praying and nudging and wondering.

But it happens for no apparent reason, doesn't it? In the theatre, for instance, one reached the point at which a number of playwrights seemed to be going further and further into the logical conclusion of *Look Back in Anger*. And then suddenly everyone said "Now I'm writing a historical play". In fact I believe no one except John Osborne did write a historical play, but instead we find any number of plays which are going off on entirely different tracks—things like David Rudkin's *Afore Night Come*, Henry Livings' work, Spike Milligan's *The Bed-Sitting Room*. All of these are far out, if you like. Do you think the same thing could happen, just as suddenly, in the cinema?

The fact that the breakthrough has come in France in the cinema and in England in the theatre is partly practical—certain sums of money and certain production conditions existed in the cinema in France and in the theatre here. The wish to break through being there, the break simply came at another point in the dam. But the question here, it seems to me, is whether the amount of talent and energy is limited or unlimited. If it's limited, then maybe the cinema in France represents an almost complete outlet for the x per cent of people in a certain age group who have the desire to express themselves in one way or another, and it may take the French theatre fifteen years before it finds a form that corresponds to its times. Here, on the other hand, the fact that the breakthrough in the theatre has worked so widely and so well—that more and more people are writing plays, and finding this tremendous freedom in the playwriting form—may actually be doing something to hold back the cinema.

Fashion, in the deepest sense of the word, has such a lot to do with it. Take someone of a certain age, walking through the streets of a town and deciding to go into a cinema or a theatre—does he do that because he wants to, or does he feel a bit self-conscious about it? In this country it's now a very exciting thing for young people to be able to say "I'm working in a theatre," or "I want to get a job in the theatre." There is all that feeling of current life about it. Whereas in France almost everyone I know of any degree of intelligence really dreads the theatre. If I say that I'm going to see a play, people look at me and say "well, I suppose you have to: after all, it's your job . . ." There couldn't possibly be any reason why one should want to go. But going to a screening or a late night projection, or rushing over in the morning to catch the first show of somebody's re-edited version of a film—all that is really part of life . . .

But the big question for all of us, it seems to me, concerns our relationship to what one must call reality. This is the

eternal question, and in the theatre it has recently been opened up in a very interesting way. The reason everyone suddenly rejected a certain type of naturalistic play—the three act drawing-room drama—was not because we didn't any longer believe in naturalism. We now see that, through breaking away from certain conventions of plot-making and so on, the new drama was actually more naturalistic than the previous one. And it's no sort of coincidence that there has been this recent re-emergence of Shakespeare in the theatre; no accident that the English have become aware that the only valid tradition in our theatre is this one, which is more realistic than any form of writing before or since because it can give you simultaneously the surface image in a context, and also tremendously dense information about things unseen and unspoken.

This can't be done any longer through language, through verse, which means that writers are consciously or instinctively beginning to look towards ways of introducing into the naturalistic pattern, the greater surface truths, all those cracks through which you can simultaneously penetrate in other directions. The use of a dated device, surrealism, in a play like *The Bed-Sitting Room* is very interesting in this context. On one level the audience can follow the situation through like a story—even if the action does happen to involve a man changing into a room. And all this is made complex and glittering, partly serious and partly touching and partly disturbing, by a possibility of spinning other ideas around it which is created not through language but through the use of surrealism as a theatre technique. Perhaps the pointers of this, of Rudkin's *Afore Night Come*, of the Theatre of the Absurd, are towards a possible coming together of these separate strands; so that a writer will find his way towards developing an action which is as photographic on the surface as, say, *Look Back in Anger* seemed at the time, and yet as disturbing on a mythological level as Rudkin's work, and as open to shifting viewpoints as *The Bed-Sitting Room*.

Freedom to Improvise

Isn't something like this happening in the cinema as well, although not yet in England?

It's blocked here because no writer in the British cinema has sufficient freedom, and no director has sufficient freedom in relation to his story. You should be able to make a film without a script, off the cuff, with three sheets of paper the way Godard worked. At least you ought in principle to be able to do this, and it's enough for the possibility to be there, open to one man, for it to affect other people. Without it, the first destructive factor of auto-censorship comes in. This is not the fear that some front office man is actually going to change what you write, and some damage has been done to our understanding of the real facts by all those naïve over-simplifications—the old story of the villain in the front office sending for the honest writer and demanding cuts in his script. Auto-censorship works very much more subtly, through the writer knowing that all sorts of practical decisions are going to be made on his document, and the director knowing whenever he writes something into a script that this is going to be typed, budgeted and put into a shooting schedule.

In the theatre, at rehearsal, one may have an idea, something one wants to try out and work on, and by the end of the morning as likely as not one has discarded it. Stage management is driven mad trying to catch up with this sort of thing, but a good stage manager usually knows by instinct when rehearsal talk really means that something has to be done, some set built, or when it's an idea you are just playing around with. But when you are dealing with the full machinery of the conventional big film production, as I was with *The Beggar's Opera*, it's terrifying to find that all manner of things one has scribbled into the script as local colour, notes one has made as a reader for oneself, possibilities to try out, have been taken deadly seriously and that months later someone will



hold you to them. Unless there are orders to the contrary, the director's whim on that sort of thing is law and must be carried through by each department, while his deeper intentions are not law at all.

All this means that you are put in the position of taking conscious, final and responsible decisions at a point where you really shouldn't and can't. There are all manner of ways of writing scripts, of preparing your intentions in advance, which don't involve this. During the period I was working with Sam Spiegel on *Lord of the Flies*, for instance, there were altogether about seven screenplays. In the end we had one which wasn't to my mind the picture I was going to make; but it also seemed to me we'd reached a point where the only thing I could do was to accept it, and then trust to the fact that we were going to be far away on an awkward island and might cheat another script on the spot. I emerged from this period with a 140-page document into which I'd put meaningless but fantastically impressive camera directions . . . "The camera tracks slowly back, and as it begins to rise it discloses over the top of the palm, left of screen . . ." This document was hardly touched or seen again, and of course it bears no relation to the finished film. It did come in very useful, though, as something to show people when we were raising money privately to make the picture; and because of the way we were doing *Lord of the Flies*, entirely independent of any production set-up, I was then able to go ahead and make the film actually without a script.

If I had been doing this in England, however, working with a regular production set-up, I couldn't possibly have played the same trick. I might have tried it, but by that time the script would have been broken down into days and budgeted, so much screen time would have been allotted to each day's shooting, and however hard I tried to sabotage my own script and find the freedom I wanted, it wouldn't have been possible. It's rather like an actor trying to resist the director during rehearsals: he can never get away with it, because by the first night he's hemmed in, trapped by all the details around him. In the same way, once you have got on the floor with a schedule and a completion guarantee (something we mercifully avoided on *Lord of the Flies*), then your possibility of finding new things is drastically reduced. And that is why so many directors seem to end up by going about things the same way. Take *Lawrence of Arabia*, for instance. In spite of David Lean's reputation, the film's Academy Awards and all the rest of it, it seems to me there is nothing of him in that film, nothing that couldn't be the work of eight other top men. Looking at those great desert long shots, one realises that the position of the camera must have been charted by a team, that the operation of simply getting the camera up must have been conditioned by so many fixed factors that the director's possibility of choice could scarcely have existed.

British films are financed and planned and controlled in such a way that everything goes into this crippling concept of screenplay. And a breakthrough can only come about thoroughly and satisfactorily if the working conditions can be freed, so that smaller crews and lower budgets give people the opportunity to take more time, and to go back on their tracks if necessary, without anyone worrying them.

This whole question of advance planning seems one of the key aspects of the cinema at the moment. Apart from the *Lawrence of Arabia* type of film, the really big commercial undertaking in which everything must be worked out long before shooting begins, you have the distinction between directors such as Antonioni and Bresson, very much in control of every aspect of their material, and the whole cinéma-vérité movement, the films of Jean Rouch, the Maysles' film about Joseph Levine, the Drew-Leacock films, in which decisions are taken at the moment of shooting and the subject of the film itself virtually

"*Lord of the Flies*".

takes charge. No one feels that these two kinds of cinema cancel each other out, or that if you want one you can't also have the other. Do you think, though, that the second line of development is more interesting?

This, I feel, is a crucial question. The film director is still in a tradition that goes right back to the nineteenth century: the tradition of the maestro, the boss, the orchestra conductor, the myth of the man who takes charge. The greatest effect of debunking introduced by *cinéma-vérité*—and like any major event of that sort, there is no going back on it—is that continually one sees that the result of a man who knows his own mind imposing his own will is often considerably less effective than what can happen by itself. This is where the problem really begins; and in the theatre one sees it all very clearly. I don't think there is a director left in the world in that old high tradition of shouting from the stalls and telling the actor how to do it. The idea of the actor saying "Mr. Reinhardt, I put myself in your hands," and the director pulling up his riding boots and saying "you will play this, and you will play it in this way"—all that has gone. And this means, in effect, that directors have repeatedly learnt, to their cost, that the result isn't as rich and lively when you impose yourself consciously on an actor, as when by some other means he manages to achieve the effect for himself. The director still eventually imposes himself, as of course he cannot but do, but in another way.

What one tends to resent in films is the top cameraman's view of reality, since one knows that his notion of what, say, a bar looks like is almost always less good than the real thing. Do I, as a director looking for a particular expressive effect, go into a studio or into a real bar? Do I trust that top cameraman's interpretation of reality, or if I stick the camera in the corner of the real bar and switch it on, may the result come closer to achieving my purpose? Is my direction of Orson Welles playing a film producer actually going to give certain moments as extraordinarily telling and expressive as Joe Levine playing himself in *Showman*, the Maysles' film? From a standpoint of strict story-telling, and in order to get a certain result in a certain space of time, I'm mad if I don't use some technical aids, including having a time-table, getting what I'm going to shoot that day down on paper, and using a man with a couple of lights when the sun goes in. And yet, by experience, one knows continually that this very thing one is straining after is not going to be as good as something achieved in another way.

I've had an extraordinary case of this on *Lord of the Flies*, where we used two cameramen as a consistent technique right through the picture. If this particular story were to be caught on celluloid in the time and conditions available, I realised that I must put every penny we had into an unlimited supply of film stock. This meant that I could stop the gaps of time and money and children and everything else running out by keeping on shooting, speaking through shots, going back without cutting the camera. And at the same time there was a second cameraman, Gerry Feil, a man who had worked for *Life* and was used to the routine of the morning story conference, who knew exactly what we were doing on the picture, down to the intention of every shot, but who worked with as much freedom as a newsreel cameraman. Through the official cameraman I would set up, say, a tracking shot; and without trying to go in for conscious compositions, all those futile bits of vanities that you will regret in the end, I would still be working to a precise pattern. This was, in other words, controlled shooting. At the same time this second cameraman would be scouting around, taking a set-up which had been brought into existence by the director but trying to find other aspects of it which would fit. And the really interesting thing is that about a third of the picture, I suppose, comes from his

material. You'd have said on the spot, while you were filming, that the fellow who's stuck away behind a tree, shooting from the back, couldn't possibly have got the really expressive moment. Then in the rushes you see that some particular hunch of the shoulders he's caught with his camera may be expressive enough; and in the cutting you realise that the situation preceding the shot makes it so clear that the jerk of a shoulder is all you need at that moment.

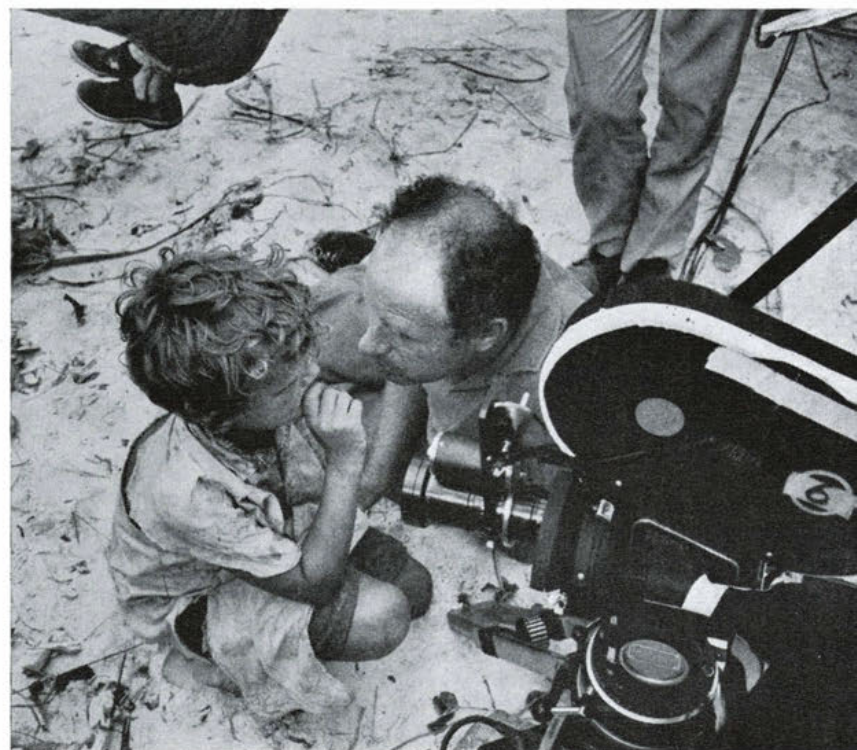
So one comes back to this same disquieting question: is the conscious language the most living one? There is no doubt, after all, that there are animate and inanimate stretches of film, and that a living stretch of film is related to the apparent spontaneity of what's going on in the frame.

The Problem of the Actor

Isn't there a further distinction to be made here between cinéma-vérité, in which the action is caught as it happens, and the work of a director like Jean-Luc Godard, who may use the same kind of realistic setting, as in Vivre sa Vie, but for his own particular artistic purposes?

To me there's no question about it: Godard is far and away the most interesting film director working today—and *Marienbad* is the worst film. In a way, naturally, this is a question of taste. But it does seem there is something here one can define: that there is always an artistic balance in every form between artifice and spontaneity. *Hiroshima mon Amour* was a very different kettle of fish from *Marienbad*, because within its very formal structure every element—the mixture of newsreel shots, real locations, fiction within a realistic context, the consciously selected realism of the French scenes—had a flexible pulse of life of its own. The formal structure was illuminated by living detail. But the formal structure of *Marienbad* was filled by details all consistently and equally dead, so that the total effect was of artifice piled on artifice.

Godard has not yet accepted the challenge of a really taxing subject, so that we haven't yet seen the application of what he can do when subjected to rigorous demands. But I'm sure the truth is in his method; that it's not entirely with Antonioni, and certainly not in the *Marienbad* way, and eventually can't be with the hand-held camera under the arm either, because of the lack of subject matter. The quality of *Showman* was that



"Lord of the Flies": Peter Brook rehearses with one of the smaller members of his cast.

it did get beneath the surface. It did it in a time-wasting, undisciplined and inartistic way, and the statement the film made didn't balance the energy put into it and the time taken. Still, something vital was caught. But *cinéma-vérité* eventually leads to an impasse, I would have thought, in relation to the narrative film. There comes a point when certain things can't be told, and you can't finally accept as valid a style which prevents you at a certain moment from doing something you want to do.

This leads to the problem of the actor, because it's here that the limitations of this style make themselves felt. Objects, I suppose, betray their inner quality most completely when photographed in their natural state. To put it less pretentiously, a real wall has something about it that no art director could predict in all its detail, and therefore must be more meaningful than a beautifully built studio wall. But with human beings this doesn't happen. An actual craftsman at work can seem very moving on the screen, very telling, but he is then a mobile object; and it's the man-as-an-object that the non-actor can best portray. The inner emotional life of a person can only be switched on, ready for photographing at a given moment, by an actor. Bresson's *Pickpocket* shows this very clearly: you had here the actual gestures of the pickpocket at work, more expressive of the real thing than anything any choreographer could have devised; but the man called on by Bresson to play the leading part was a real non-actor, incapable of simulating emotions which he had no earthly reason to be feeling at that moment. In Robbe-Grillet's *L'Immortelle* we see a startling example of this.

You can, of course, go out into the street and pick a man off it who can act—but that doesn't prove anything except that you have made a good choice. Some of the children in *Lord of the Flies* act very well indeed, and no doubt this will help to perpetuate the myth that all children can act. I certainly don't want to take the credit for this. Where I can take the credit, though, is for all the 3,000 children I rejected, because when a child *can't* act he is worse than any bad professional actor. And the same thing goes for taking people off the streets in the old Italian tradition: if the director has the flair to find the right man and if he gives a good performance, that only means he is a natural actor, even though not a professional one.

Eventually, however, to reproduce a narrative situation you are compelled to pick on the freak people who are like mediums, who have that particular power of doing it to order. Jeanne Moreau is for me the ideal contemporary film actress, because she doesn't characterise. She acts in the way Godard films, and with her you are as close as you can be to making a document of an emotion. The average trained actor's approach to a part is based on good Stanislavsky principles: he rationalises, he prepares, he composes his characterisation. He has some conscious direction of what he is doing, so that in a way he is like the classic film director setting up his camera: the actor is setting himself up and directing himself, beautifully or otherwise. But Jeanne Moreau works like a medium, through her instincts. She gets a hunch about the character and then some part of her watches the improvisation of that and lets it happen, occasionally intervening a bit like a good technician when, for instance, she wants to be facing the camera, to be at the right angle. But she is guiding the flow of improvisation rather than stating ahead of time what hurdle she wants herself to leap, and the result is that her performance gives you an endless series of tiny surprises. On each take neither you nor she knows exactly what is going to happen.

The great criticism of *Moderato Cantabile* was that I didn't move the camera enough, that I set it up and allowed things to happen in front of it, and it was assumed I did this because I came from the theatre and didn't know any better. In fact, there was a lot of conscious thinking behind it. The narrative we were trying to capture in that particular film was neither an external one nor entirely an inner one—you can't say that the characters behave as they do because they live by a river in

a dull town, but you can't ignore the way these things relate to them either. So, having found the landscape and these particular actors, my task seemed to be to set up a camera that didn't comment; to let you watch, as it were, a documentary record of something so intangible that you could feel it was really happening. Those long silences, like that close-up of Jeanne Moreau standing against a white sky, might have been turned by Shakespeare into fifty extraordinarily precise images which would have described in narrative form what we were trying to communicate with that weight of silence. And it wasn't actually silence that one was photographing, or a Japanese composition of an empty white screen, but a look on her face and a tiny movement of her cheek, which to me were valid because she was actually *and at that moment* experiencing something which therefore became interesting to look at as an object. The particular documentary aspect of filming, the catching of something as it happens, relates in this way to acting: the aim is always to capture that look in someone's eye.

Impressions of Reality

How much of Moderato Cantabile was actually planned in detail in advance? I'm thinking particularly of the dinner party sequence just before the heroine leaves her husband. The camera is on her, and you hear some casual question asked from just off screen. As the question is asked, as I recall it, you cut to the tracking shot along the railings with the musical phrase accompanying it on the sound-track. Then you cut back to her face again, and she's saying "I'm sorry, what did you say?" The question is repeated and answered. Then another question comes in, and you repeat the same movement. In each case it's almost mathematically worked out. Was this done in the editing, or were the tracking shots, for instance, already there in the script?

Moderato was made possible by French working conditions, and I did the film with a script which no self-respecting English producer would have considered for a moment. I'm lazy about writing and also don't like committing myself in advance, so I sat down with the book (as I did with *Lord of the Flies*) and just went through it arbitrarily giving a series of numbers—close shot; mid shot; long shot; close shot; mid shot; long shot. There was no detailed description, nothing more than an identification of the location. The producer, Raoul Levy, yelled at me in horror, but I yelled back at him "you're very old-fashioned!" and that seemed to work as an argument. The film was under way already, and it was left like that without a real script. But the whole mood of the dinner party scene was already there very clearly in the book, and I did actually think of the two tracking shots and put down that idea at script stage. After that, everything happened more or less in the proper order: we found the house and got permission to use the dining-room; my French assistant director went around locally finding these people to invite; and after that it was really a very simple scene to do. We sat them down, served them salmon, and went around photographing the scene, doing a considerable coverage of a very formal sort, with symmetrical shots up the table one way, then down it the other. Then we made a pattern in the cutting.

Moderato Cantabile looks as though it was a very carefully shot film, as though you couldn't possibly have got the same results with the kind of two-camera method you used on Lord of the Flies. Have your own attitudes to the cinema changed at all during the last few years, or are the different methods the result of working on two such very different subjects?

It's really a result of the subjects. And although they are at opposite poles, they do have something in common which attracted me to them. Deep down, both are rituals: *Moderato* is a little death ritual; and *Lord of the Flies* is, I suppose, a little death ritual . . . of another sort. But the only reason I had for wanting to make *Moderato*, and the only value that could come out of it, was such a fine and fragile one that the least jar would have smashed it. So it seemed the technique really had

to be one of stillness, and the pre-arranging, all the formal work of putting things into what seemed precisely the right position, was really an act of elimination. The particular effect I was after seemed so slight that it could only be seen in the eyes of Jeanne Moreau. And this meant that I started from a total conviction that the camera just out of range, getting her from the back, couldn't in the circumstances catch anything as valid as I could myself by staring at her from the best possible viewpoint.

The qualities of *Lord of the Flies* aren't fragile at all. In fact, there is an element of fragility, in the paradise state at the beginning of the story, which unhappily the actual physical conditions of shooting made it impossible for us to catch. The best moments in the film really come when we were charging among the children at night with our flares and hand-held cameras, since group behaviour can always be caught most interestingly when it's loosely approached. Ideally, though, I'd really like to combine the two methods much more. I wouldn't choose to make another film as formalised as *Moderato Cantabile*, but I would like to use the things we discovered with our improvised methods on *Lord of the Flies* and be able to apply them more strictly, in a more controlled way.

It all leads back to the central problem, which is that of finding ways of giving a denser impression of reality. We've been prisoners for years of a naïve simplification of what realism means—hence the British cinema view that it is all a matter of art direction, something to be achieved by being more honest than the Americans in the amount of rain that beats upon your heroine. We've touched on some of the problems here. Part of the fiction that has to be exploded concerns the myth that the director's hand must be permanently visible. This becomes an unreality, as in *Marienbad*, and then a consistent style becomes an unreality. Now all the methods of freeing camerawork have brought us closer to a surface realism, and the next thing that comes up is the question of why *cinéma-vérité* also is in the end false, why it too gives us only another two-dimensional version. It's related to the film view of time, that logic by which anyone who has begun to move his hand to the right in one frame will consistently, each twenty-fourth of a second later, still be moving his hand to the right, that cinema world of perfect logic and order. None of this, though, corresponds to our own hunch of a much stranger and more complex reality.

What the French have begun to do, it seems to me, is to introduce into the direct narrative all sorts of other elements—outside references, surreal behaviour, like those odd things in *Jules et Jim*, bits of theatre and so on, which by breaking through the conventions increase the opportunity for a denser expression of reality. What Godard has done in editing, in destroying the logic between two shots, has been equally valid. So has the use of subliminal references, like the extraordinary subliminal effect in the opening titles of *Cuba Si*. And while it may seem false, unrealistic, and therefore meaningless to put a star face into a realistically shot background—Anna Karina, say, against the background of Paris in *Vivre sa Vie*—the very fact that this antagonism of styles can create a sort of comment and question mark within a shot can make that shot denser, because it makes you as a spectator more intelligent. I am a spectator at a film, caught up in its action, and at the same time the actress has just done something so curious that I am pulled out of the scene, forced to ask myself what she is doing and why. The answer that I find makes that scene as three-dimensional as it once was made—to go back to the Elizabethans—through the technical device of having people stop talking conversationally and begin talking in . . . really in images.

"... As close as you can be to making a document of an emotion."
Jeanne Moreau in "*Moderato Cantabile*".



NOTHING BUT THE



'TRUTH'

MARCORELLES

by LOUIS

AT LYONS A FEW MONTHS AGO, a three-day conference improbably proved as stimulating as any recent experience in the cinema. Pierre Schaeffer, enthusiast for *musique concrète* and guiding hand of the Research Service of the RTF (radio and television), had collected together at Lyons the leading representatives of that current movement in films which has rather hastily been christened *cinéma-vérité*. From the United States came Robert Drew, Richard Leacock and the brothers Albert and David Maysles; from Canada Michel Brault; France was represented by Edgar Morin, Jean Rouch and Mario Ruspoli. Joris Ivens and Georges Rouquier were there to maintain a connection with the glorious past. Claude Goretta and Alain Tanner, who made *Nice Time* while working in England but are now thoroughly re-established in their native Switzerland, provided a link with Free Cinema; and Raoul Coutard, cameraman for Godard and Truffaut, was there to remind us of the *nouvelle vague*. Among the many technical experts and equipment manufacturers also represented at Lyons were the Swiss engineer Kudelski, the man behind the Nagra tape-recorder, and the Frenchman André Coutant, deviser of the ultra-light camera which carries his

name. Richard Leacock and Albert Maysles had brought their own special cameras with them. The *Marché International des Programmes et Equipements de Télévision*, unpromising as its title sounds, should go down as one of the more significant gatherings in recent cinema history.

This conference demonstrated simultaneously the major role played by television in the evolution of new cinematic techniques, and television's own failure to draw the kind of aesthetic conclusions which these techniques lead to. It was particularly depressing to see the kind of work being done in French television, and one understood why Leacock should seem impatient when confronted with these meaningless scraps of TV chatter, based on the simple idea that it is enough to get people talking on the screen for the truth to pour out. The proper work and dynamism of the cinema is here cut down to nothing, and intellectual laziness triumphs beneath a pseudo-intellectual surface. To be fair to these French television directors, one must remember that they are still often compelled to work with heavy and unmanageable equipment. All the

Above: Jane Fonda in the Drew-Leacock film "Jane".

same, one has the impression that the real failing is a temperamental one in some of my compatriots, who seem to think that to uncover reality, *whatever form it may take*, is almost a mortal sin.

Two men dominated the debates at Lyons and gave expression to the two chief (and opposed) tendencies of this cinema of immediacy: Richard Leacock and Jean Rouch. And in fact the evident hostility between their points of view suggested not merely an incompatibility between two different ways of looking at things, but even in a sense between two rival forms of civilisation, the French and the Anglo-Saxon. Leacock postulates a kind of cinematic Rousseauism, with echoes of his master, Flaherty: let us uncover people and objects in their natural state, rediscover the motion of reality, and we will return the cinema to its primary function, that of revealing the beauty of the world. For Rouch, whose admiration for Flaherty is no less extreme, the thing is to avoid the too easy truths, to try always to penetrate to the source of that social comedy which primitive and civilised life alike impose on us. Leacock criticises Rouch for trying to force meanings and interpretations, for preventing people from simply being themselves. And Rouch in his turn says that Leacock is too contemplative in his attitudes, that he accepts too readily and uncritically everything in the idea of "the American way of life". The argument remains unresolved. I would merely add that it is dispiriting to see these twin pioneers of an exciting and revolutionary movement in the cinema so at loggerheads.

Robert Drew and Richard Leacock gave Lyons the world première of two films on which they were working desperately hard last autumn and winter: *The Chair*, devised by Gregory Shuker, with active collaboration from Richard Leacock, and *Jane*, largely the work of Donald Pennebaker, who is the third man in the triumvirate behind Drew Associates. One ought to note, too, the essential part played by Robert Drew in the final editing of these films: the ultimate decisions and responsibilities are his. Some Sherlock Holmes of film criticism may one day be able to elucidate the different parts played in the partnership by Robert Drew, one-time reporter for *Life*, and Richard Leacock, the passionate cineaste. And his starting-point might be that Drew always talks of their work as screen journalism, while Leacock never uses the term. But perhaps their enterprise, remarkable though it is, will only achieve its full stature when both men are prepared to recognise that even their type of cinema demands the awareness of a single creative mind at work behind each film. When this search for truth admits the need for subjectivity, when the fiction film recaptures its rights over this territory, taking from *cinéma-vérité* its directness, its ability to involve us with people on its special level of intimacy, then, one feels, the mission of this innovative cinema will have been accomplished.

For the meantime, it should be said that the Lyons audience found *The Chair* and *Jane* simultaneously exciting and baffling; and both films certainly fulfilled Leacock's ambition, which is to rouse contradictory reactions in his audience. And so what? The comment is that of Jean Rouch, impressed by the films but at the same time irritated by their strictly negative

character. I was in New York myself last July at the moment when the fate of the Negro Paul Crump, whose case is the subject of *The Chair*, was being played out in Chicago. I can bear witness to the excitement with which Drew, Leacock and their colleagues reacted to a case which stirred them deeply, although the film itself is oddly ambiguous in the comment it makes. The point at issue was that the state no longer had a moral right to send to the electric chair a criminal who, during the nine years of his imprisonment, had become to all intents and purposes a different man. If Crump had been sent to the chair, the film would survive as irrefutable evidence of human injustice. If he were pardoned (as in fact happened), the validity of the document should none the less remain as striking. Why, then, do we feel a kind of dissatisfaction about the film?

To determine this, it would be necessary to analyse in detail the structure of the film as it's presented to us; to take into account how far the emphasis has shifted—as a necessary result of shooting conditions and the special problems of filming where and as it was desired—from Crump himself to his lawyer, Don Moore; and how far the simpler human truths have been sacrificed in the editing to the more factitious elements of Hollywood-style suspense. One sequence of the film is entirely Richard Leacock's work, and is quite extraordinary: Don Moore is waiting in his office for the two telephone calls which will tell him firstly whether the appeal jury has decided to commute his client's death sentence, and secondly whether the Governor of Illinois agrees to the commutation. The calls come through and the answers are the right ones. In his relief, Moore suddenly launches into a wonderful kind of poetic improvisation about the peace he can enjoy now that the case is at last over. The camera here seems at one with its subject, and the result is one of those lyrical bursts of feeling which only the cinema can capture with just this degree of intensity. We imagine, suddenly, a cinema of fiction which could use these methods and harness them to show us a character in depth.

Jane is concerned with the Broadway début as a star of the actress Jane Fonda; and the faults and virtues of the film are much the same. The theme lacks construction, although a pattern, roughly corresponding to the chronology of events, has been imposed in the editing. It isn't enough, however, to patch up the gaps in the coverage. Pennebaker and his colleagues, working most of the time with considerable skill and



"Showman": Joseph Levine, Sophia Loren, and Oscar.



Paris street scene: a shot from Chris Marker's new film in the ciné-vérité manner, "Le Joli Mai".

with full co-operation from the delightful Miss Fonda, invite us backstage. We watch her rehearsing a rather banal play in a small New York theatre, then polishing it during out of town tryouts at Philadelphia and Wilmington, then the Broadway opening before the dreaded New York critics. We follow Jane to Sardi's after the opening; then home, as she nervously leafs through the first reviews. The play is a flop—as indeed had seemed probable. It's decided to close down, and the company meets for the last time to discuss this decision. At dawn Jane and her director, Andreas, who is also her fiancé, leave the theatre. The posters for the play are already being pulled down.

Much as one admires the kind of creative effort that has gone into the film, one has reservations which are hard to pin down. Firstly—and here Rouch decidedly has a point—there is no suggestion in the film of any criticism of that whole great myth of American show business, that contagious madness which William Gibson has dissected so remarkably in his *The Seesaw Log*. And then one has to ask oneself: didn't Sidney Lumet do it all better, helped by a good script, Franz Planer's admirable camerawork and Susan Strasberg's performance, in *Stage Struck*? It's a tricky question to answer. At the level of immediate perception, the physical sensation that something really is happening as it's being filmed, *Jane* holds all the cards. Rather, it is dramatic art itself which is put in question, when in one shot we see the real Jane Fonda, shaking with stage fright, waiting to go on, and in the next see her actually on stage, giving a rather artificial performance. It is for details like this that Leacock's kind of cinema remains unequalled. One recognises that acting for the screen and acting for the stage are not identical, and that Jane Fonda herself, as directed by Joshua Logan in the film *Tall Story*, gave a performance no less artificial, no less at odds with the "real" Jane Fonda, with her wonderful quality of spontaneity. Perhaps Donald Pennebaker ought to make a true fiction film, but with actors playing as they do in *Jane* when they are off the stage.

The brothers Albert and David Maysles, both formerly with Drew Associates, help to answer some of the questions for us with *Showman*, their film on the life and work of the Boston film mogul Joe Levine. Here there are no pretensions to artificial "suspense", and no complacency with regard to the subject of the film. The picture is not sentimentalised, nor is there any feeling of malice in its making. Jonas Mekas, discussing it in *The Village Voice*, could fairly write, echoing Godard, that "a man is a man is a man." I don't know what Mr. Levine's own reactions may be to this astonishing portrait of himself. But, undoubtedly, the film puts firmly in their place all those volumes of words written in the last year or so for the big American magazines about this typically American success story. With Albert Maysles operating the camera, and his brother David the sound equipment, Joe Levine was tracked about New York, Boston, Hollywood, Rome, Cannes at festival time. Without comment, they introduce us to this strange ritual of big business bargaining, with Levine explaining in inimitable jargon to a European distributor, in a room at the Carlton at Cannes, "You be good to my film, and I'll be very good to you."

Seeing the rushes of the film last summer in New York, I thought the material admirable, though it was difficult to see just what might be done with it during the editing and what the effect would be. Discussing the eventual shape of the film with Al Maysles, I imagined he might be planning a sort of Eisenstein montage. But in fact *Showman* is bare, stripped down, even to the commonplace but precise commentary written and spoken by Norman Rosten.

The kind of criticisms which I've voiced about the Drew and Leacock films collapse before this one. I think I can see a reason for this, and one reason only: the consistently inspired work done by Al Maysles with his camera—with the sound track, of course, keeping up. I am thinking particularly of the way, for instance, the camera threads its way between two

standing figures to bring us up face to face with Joe Levine, sitting talking in his office. Levine and his colleagues continue their conversation, and the camera moves to the left through a 45 degree arc to frame Levine alone on the screen for a decisive instant. The link between the cameraman and his subject here seems so close that one can talk of a kind of exchange operating between them.

"We just like to make movies," was Al Maysles' rather splendid answer to an aggressive Roberto Rossellini, forgetful of his own early films, who criticised the Maysles for not producing "art", and for sacrificing too much to a dangerous modern passion for the formless and shapeless. Rossellini's own *Vanina Vanini*, that too beautiful film, shows how dangerous a pointless aestheticism can be. And it was encouraging to hear such a candid profession of faith in the cinema.

* * *

At the opposite pole from these experiments with direct filming, with nothing prearranged, rehearsed or re-staged, Jean Rouch showed his *La Punition*, a "psychodrama" filmed in 1960, immediately after *Chronique d'un Été*, and *Rose et Landry*, a film which he shot in Africa, at Abidjan, for the National Film Board of Canada. Unlike Leacock and the Maysles Brothers, Rouch lets the people in his films become, as it were, their own sound recordists, giving them miniature microphones to wear in a lapel or a tie, so that he can follow them everywhere and still record sound in synch. From the outset, in other words, there is a kind of complicity between the director and his interpreters on the screen. *La Punition*, filmed in continuity during two days, shows us Nadine Ballot, the young girl from Rouch's *La Pyramide Humaine*, who has just been thrown out of the Paris school where she was studying philosophy. In the course of her wanderings she has various encounters: with a student who declares himself in love with her, then leaves her, with a middle-aged man who asks her home with him. The actors have no written text but follow a line partially laid down for them by the director; and the result is fairly unsatisfactory. Anne Vernon, the Caroline of Becker's *Edouard et Caroline*, had no difficulty, during a discussion meeting at the UNESCO Film Club, in showing up the artificiality of the playing in the episode with the older man. Nadine Ballot herself admitted that her own character, as she portrayed it on the screen, seemed quite unreal to her.

In *Rose et Landry* Rouch stages a conversation between two young African students, a boy and girl, and demonstrates through cross-cutting done with a simplicity almost reminiscent of Griffith, taking its rhythm from the dialogue of the couple, how past and present blend, how close ancestral traditions still seem to these young African intellectuals, and how for them our white civilisation still remains something strange and mysterious, however much of it they may assimilate. Edited by Jacques Godbout of the National Film Board, working in line with Rouch's indications, the film pushes to its limit the director's liking for developing a genuine conflict through speech and language.

Rouch's cinema is pre-eminently one of argument and discussion, and it's always on the point of leaving the realm of art to enter that of scientific research. It is only incidentally a spectacle—which might seem a criticism. But it is the nature of the film spectacle that the creator of *Moi un Noir* forces us to test and question, both in its social function (the importance of communication) and in its aesthetic function (where does truth begin, and where does it end?). Rouch and Leacock both, in their different ways, seem to be leading us down dead end roads, and a way out is perhaps suggested by the work in Canada of Michel Brault. He was cameraman on Mario Ruspoli's *Les Inconnus de la Terre* and *Regard sur la Folie*, as well as on *Chronique d'un Été* and *La Punition*, and in rapid succession he has made two films which seem to extend the

perspectives of the movement we must still, for want of a better word, call *cinéma-vérité*. The lesser work, *Seul ou avec les autres*, is highly sympathetic, a collective improvisation on a given theme, entirely conceived, played and produced by students of the University of Montreal, but photographed by Brault and edited by Gilles Groulx of the Film Board. A young student, Nicole, arrives at the university. Her thoughts are centred on boys, but the one she cares for most, Pierre, is always busy with something else. All over the university campus, all around her, other people seem to be preoccupied with love. Filming much of the time with a telephoto lens, with three lenses simultaneously fixed on the camera, Brault left his actors (also outfitted with portable microphones) complete freedom of movement. A real feeling of youth is communicated, making most of the films we've seen on student life look decidedly artificial.

But the film Michel Brault has recently completed, *Pour la Suite du Monde*, is a much more important work, demanding discussion at greater length than I can manage here. Made in collaboration with Pierre Perrault, an expert on Canadian folklore, the film concerns a little French Canadian community living on an island in the Saint Lawrence river, about fifty miles from Quebec. For a year Perrault, Brault, and the sound engineer Marcel Carrière lived in the village, where the language spoken is still the French of the seventeenth century, where the people seem in some ways no less remote than the Eskimos of *Nanook*, although inevitably maintaining their links with modern civilisation. Perrault and Brault have composed a sort of symphony of work in a perfectly self-enclosed community. Have they brought off the masterpiece which would finally give its letters patent to this famous *cinéma-vérité*? Not exactly. We're still waiting for *cinéma-vérité's Nanook*. But in this film the whole rhythm of the editing rediscovers the virtues of discipline. We are given more than a simple narration of fact; the part played by the sound track is basic. A new style, more urgent, more immediately alive, is being hammered out; and it is bound to make us realise everything that was missing from the great documentaries of the past. Spoken language recovers its proper place in the film: it is integrated into the whole rhythm of the action, not stuck on to the film at a later stage.

Cinéma-vérité in itself raises all sorts of artistic problems, and a film such as *Pour la Suite du Monde* is a first stage towards solving them. From there, we are led towards the question of how a dramatic cinema might use these methods of direct shooting to enhance the subtlety of its fiction. Might this way lead to something richer than what now passes in the cinema for great art? If one can't imagine any ultimate coming together of strict documentary and the cinema of fiction, none the less we might arrive at a cinema which could rediscover for the screen some of the epic qualities of a Brechtian theatre. In bringing us closer to daily life as it is lived, *cinéma-vérité* can help us to discover that there are no hard and fast rules, and that experience is a continuous series of tests and discoveries.



Richard Leacock using the hand-held camera which is *cinéma-vérité's* trademark.



Gaoler and prisoner: Bette Davis and Joan Crawford in "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?"

SHE'S NAMING NAMES!" Apologising for keeping me waiting—Bette Davis was doing a B.B.C. recording in her Savoy Hotel suite and there had been a technical hitch—the young P.R.O. confided with a thrill that Miss Davis was taking the programme's title, *Frankly Speaking*, very literally indeed.

Half an hour later a preoccupied B.B.C. producer was wrapping up his equipment to the accompaniment of semi-serious queries about the libel laws; and George Coulouris, one of Miss D.'s co-workers on *All This and Heaven Too* who had apparently been acting as a buffer between the actress and her other inquisitor, was ruefully saying that it had been a "lively" experience. I feared, out and out fan that I am, that Miss Davis would find my genuflections something of an anticlimax after all that fur-flying.

But I reckoned without her legendary energy. A Margo Channing guffaw in the passage, a verbally explosive entrance, a keen-eyed appraisal: "SIGHT AND SOUND's a very, very fine magazine. Yeah. Have you seen my beautiful tulips?" She grabs a vitamin pill, her daughter Barbara is introduced and as rapidly whisked away ("Run along, sweetie, mother's got to work"), the crowded room empties.

Over here to publicise her latest film, *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*, Bette Davis has about as much physical resemblance to the character she plays in it as her 19-year-old Stanley in *In This Our Life* (1942) had to her Queen Elizabeth

PETER
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MEETING

of three years earlier. The voice, the hair, are still very Margo Channing. The figure is slim. Where Joan Crawford has generally equated playing for real with a marked absence of make-up (*Baby Jane*, *Paid*, the splendidly schizoid finale of *Possessed*), Bette Davis has often preferred to pile it on. Wearing Jane's horrendous mask, which tops the last ravaged stages of Mrs. Skeffington's decline with Mary Pickford ringlets and a velvet pancake hat, was apparently a great strain. "We shot the exteriors on location using passers-by, not extras, in the streets. I'd dive out of the bank to my car, and a startled voice would say: 'What the hell was *that*!'"

She agrees that there is a lot of Stanley in Jane: the same psychopathic pattern of the ruthlessly selfish and destructive child who has never grown up, the same wheedling helplessness when things get out of hand. But Jane, for all her malignity, she sees as an essentially sympathetic, tragic character, whereas the unilluminated hardness Huston insisted she bring to Stanley she found uncongenial. In common with other actresses (Nancy Price, Flora Robson) best remembered for their "bad" characters, Bette Davis has no interest in uncompromisingly evil roles. This doubtless partly accounts for her loathing of *Beyond the Forest* and the tensions with Wyler ("If I was a Callas, he was the male Bette Davis") which surfaced during *The Letter* and flared up decisively on *The Little Foxes*. Nevertheless she regards Wyler as her most rewarding director and mentor, the one she would most like to work with again.

* * *

"Bob Aldrich is a genius." This wasn't a comment on the finished film—she hadn't apparently seen it yet—but on his decision to co-star her with Joan Crawford, and on the way he finished the job within five weeks. "Joan, the great glamour star, and me, I've no glamour, I'm an actress." She didn't have time, during such a frantic shooting schedule, even to begin to wonder whether the film would be a success. Now she marvels at the way teenagers are flocking to see a picture which, she reminds me, "has no sex."

Certainly, short of a comeback by Garbo, it is difficult to imagine a more commanding star occasion. Davis and Crawford, Red Queen and White Queen, together for the first time in roles they might have dreamed up themselves. No other distaff casting, however different or distinguished the film, could produce quite the same *frisson* of anticipation. Stanwyck and Katharine Hepburn, Dietrich and Vivien Leigh: however auspicious the project one doubts whether any such partnership could be regarded as a factor vital to success. Only Davis and Crawford, though separately minor box-office draws for some years now, together amount to a potentially unique commodity, a film's sole *raison d'être*.

That *Baby Jane* should have been conceived as a blatantly opportunistic vehicle is not, in itself, especially culpable. At least it is a vehicle. It goes. It is the half-heartedness of its propulsion that one regrets. Agreed that a warning example of box-office mutability was recently supplied by the comparative flop of Judy Garland's *I Could Go On Singing*. But whereas musicals have always proved notoriously fallible, Associates

BABY JANE

and Aldrich could surely have assumed that *Baby Jane* would tap contemporary appetites at their safest and sickest: post-*Psycho* horrors, a decaying *Sunset Boulevard* setting, sadism both explicit and—in the cross-cutting from stewed rat or smashed skull to equally brutal comic relief—implicit.

Yet, apart from the stars, there is little sign of confidence on the screen. The production, which amassed a total of \$2,000,000 in rental fees within a fortnight of its American release opening, cost a tight \$825,000. Davis and Crawford refused to sell out their handsome stake in the profits; and in view of the picture's frequent air of incompetence one can only applaud their foresight.

Cross-cutting, repetition, stagy camerawork—these are the signs that Aldrich is nervous, playing it safe. Like some textbook student of Hitchcock who never got beyond *Blackmail*, he dispenses suspense with ham-fisted conventionality. Baby Jane parking her car is cross-cut with captive sister Blanche trying to attract a neighbour's attention: not, mind you, by sensibly yelling for help from the window but by throwing out a type-written message of distress so that it can fall, crumpled, at Jane's feet. The camera zooms in on the spot where Jane has retrieved the S.O.S. And it goes on zooming intermittently from then on: telephones, servants' bells, a hammer thoughtfully placed within Jane's reach by an imminent victim.

Everything seems to happen at least twice, with a consequent decrease in tension, whether unintentionally in the scenes concerning the sisters or intentionally in the cuts from each new climactic horror to the comic relief of Victor Buono's flabby, impecunious pianist with overweening aspirations. Just as the repetitions breed monotony, so does the equally crude and emphatic performance of the actress playing the pianist's Cockney mother. One harridan is enough. Two quickly becomes a bore. It is this overloading, coupled with some woodenly regimented extras at start and finish, which betrays a shift on Aldrich's part from the slick hysteria of *Kiss Me Deadly*, *The Big Knife* and *Attack!* to the slack hysterics of *Baby Jane*.

One factor remains, however, and it is greatly to Aldrich's credit. Unlike certain directors who have deferred too readily to these actresses' demands, he has frequently caught them here at their best, never at their worst. (One recalls, if reluctantly, Bette Davis's jodhpurred Napoleonic tantrums in Irving Rapper's *Another Man's Poison*, or Joan's first flouncing entrance down about six flights of stairs in Ranald McDougall's *Queen Bee*.) There are times when Aldrich's disinclination to cut away from his stars leaves them high and dry, as if they were waiting for a new page of script to be delivered. But in the main they seem to have found a new maturity, a discipline encouraged perhaps by the confined sets and Crawford's wheelchair, or by the interaction of their professional rivalry upon a belated mutual respect.

Gone is Crawford's galvanic facial display. In its place is the fine muscular tension of her agonised drag down the stairs, followed by some notable close-ups of pouted, terrified eyes and sagging chin at the phone; and all along that sense of silky reasonableness hiding inner steel, paving the way for the



Bette Davis in *Bordertown* (1934).

unconvincing yet histrionically memorable last-minute confession.

This scene, weirdly touching in its regression to sandcastles, ice-creams, childhood secrets and reconciliations, provides one of Bette's most characteristic reaction-shots: hands clapped defiantly over her ears, then unwillingly removed, truth dawning, body and face tautening, eyes dilated in horror, the slow turn of the head, and finally a girlish scramble to her feet and simple, spontaneous forgiveness. Showy though the part is, she still resists the temptation to caricature its obvious Charles Addams qualities. Caught dumping a corpse in the back of her car, she represses her terror under a chill, weary, sullen air of resignation. The observation here is controlled, intelligent, absolutely right. Just as sure is the acid comedy of her impersonation of Joan Crawford on the telephone, or her abstracted exchanges with the equally self-absorbed pianist to whom she confides her grotesque plans for a Las Vegas come-back.

* * *

I can't entirely agree with those critics who maintain that *Baby Jane* is disagreeable because it "plays on the public's subconscious resentment of film stars." It seems to me that a better case could be made out along these lines against producers. One thing the recent autobiographies of Davis and Crawford* have in common is this suggestion of a reckless,

**The Lonely Life* (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, \$5.75). *A Portrait of Joan* (Doubleday and Co., New York, \$4.50).



almost insanely destructive resentment on the part of some Hollywood executives towards the stars they have helped to create. Sacked if they have "about as much sex appeal as Slim Summerville" (Carl Laemmle on Davis); rewarded, if they have a personal success, with a load of junk gathering the dust of years on a script editor's shelf; reminded continually, in case they get too uppity, that a star has only four years at the top—that celebrated old M-G-M litany of the Thirties. The careers of both actresses are a story of constant battles for better directors and a continuity of suitable scripts. The cost, in Miss Davis's own words, has been a (deserved) reputation for being "uncompromising, peppery, untractable, monomaniacal, tactless, volatile and oft-times disagreeable."



Though Joan Crawford's book (written with Jane Kesner Ardmore) is somewhat invalidated by a gushing, fan-magazine style and a defensive, evasive tone, Bette's has a more personal astringency. Not only does it read as if she herself wrote it ("My head reeled" . . . "I was apoplectic" . . . "Plus, I didn't need a co-star" . . . "That was *his* problem" . . . "Get out, Mother! And stay out!"); it communicates directly the excitement of arc-lights and grease-paint, dedicated work and war. Especially the latter: "I prefer to believe that on the set during *Mr. Skeffington* my eye-wash was filled with aceteyne by mistake." And Michael (De Sade) Curtiz, who was some dozen years later to rip one of Crawford's Mildred Pierce costumes from neck to hem and send her crying to her dressing-room, mutters behind the camera whenever Bette is on the floor: "God-damned-nothing-no-good-sexless-son-of-a-bitch."

The film was *Cabin in the Cotton* (1932), and this was the period when, in Bette's words: "Joan Crawford would start every film as a factory worker who punched the time-clock in a simple black Molyneux with white piping (someone's idea of poverty) and ended marrying the boss who now allowed her to deck herself out in tremendous buttons, cuffs and shoes with bows (someone's idea of wealth)." Bette, whose own favourite stars are Brando, Magnani, Signoret and Katharine Hepburn, was determined to be Hollywood's first naturalistic actress, and this was the driving force behind all her most celebrated battles. She found Anatole Litvak "a slave to the camera"; insisted on doing her own make-up for the last stages of Mildred's consumption, poverty and neglect in *Of Human Bondage*; refused to play her mad scene in Archie Mayo's *Bordertown* in the accepted "fright-wig, bug-eyed tradition"; and castigated a narcissistic leading man for watching his own death scene in a mirror ("Don't you think Bette is crying a little too much?").

Not that Bette Davis's idea of naturalism has always been shared by the critics. Having reached the top within three years of a film test that turned her into "a mattress in a bawdy-house," the realism she demanded soon became a highly flexible definition. Mrs. Skeffington always struck me as one of her most artificial performances, employing as it did that affected, over-syllabised style of diction she brought to *The Corn is Green*, *The Virgin Queen* and, most exaggeratedly, *Pocketful of Miracles*. Like Brando in particular, she tends to be self-conscious about any accent other than her own. Similarly, I suspect she rationalises her dislike of *The Little Foxes* and *In This Our Life* on rather tenuous, misapplied grounds of unnaturalism: she objects to the luxury of the settings in the first, whereas in fact an *atmosphere* of Southern decay hangs over the whole film; and thought she was too old for Stanley, which remains her most youthful-looking star role.

What does the future hold for this likeably determined, positive and remarkably gifted actress? Immediately, a guest appearance with Sinatra in an Aldrich spoof Western, *Four for Texas*, then a story of twin sisters, one of whom murders the other, to be directed by Paul Henreid. It is encouraging to hear that she would love to make a film with Robert Mulligan or John Frankenheimer; and that, after several years on Broadway, she regards *Baby Jane* as a personally auspicious start to a new film career. As countless others must have done, I wished her well. "Next time," she promised, "we must get together for a real long gab-fest."

Above: "Flamingo Road" (1949). Sydney Greenstreet played a political racketeer; Joan went from rags (circus dancer), to riches (politician's wife), to prison.

Left: Bette Davis in "The Star" (1952). The poster is of Judith Traherne in "Dark Victory": "... my favourite and the public's favourite part I have ever played."

IN THE PICTURE

The Cool World

DOROTHY OSHLAG writes: Every crew on the completion of shooting feels that it has participated in something unique, that "someone should write a book about it." Most of the time memories and personal associations fade within a matter of weeks, people scatter to other jobs, and by the time the picture is released it seems irrelevant to talk about how it all was done. But many of us who worked on *The Cool World*, an independent feature shot in New York last summer, persist in feeling that it really is unique, because the story was not only being acted for the camera but was going on around us on the streets where we were shooting.

Adapted from a novel by Warren Miller, *The Cool World* is a first film for its producer, a young Boston lawyer named Frederick Wiseman, and the second feature for director Shirley Clarke, who made *The Connection*. The world of the title is Negro Harlem, more particularly the world of teenage gang kids. It has never before been explored in a feature film, and certainly never attempted with the leading characters played by fifteen and sixteen-year-olds whose main qualification was their expert knowledge of the "turf" rather than any acting experience.

Unorthodox procedures were followed from the beginning of casting, when it became evident that professional actors were just not right. We turned to every kind of youth organisation we could find in the city—church clubs, settlement houses, social clubs—to get boys to come to audition. Without exception, when faced with a script they could not read a single line with conviction. But then a miraculous thing would begin to happen. Shirley would take the script away and outline a situation for them taken from a scene in the film: usually it was grasped immediately, and the boys would begin to improvise dialogue that was uncannily close to what would finally be required. The two rival gangs were cast in this way, following months of after-school and weekend sessions of improvisations. The adult parts, on the other hand, were cast without difficulty from among the many competent Negro professionals available in New York. At the beginning of shooting we were left with only one character still not cast to our satisfaction: Luanne, the gang's girl. Three successive Luanne's had been found and discarded. Another was tentatively selected but didn't really excite anyone. Then, early one Sunday morning, we were shooting some pick-up street shots when work had to be halted for people coming by from church; and there she was, in a tight dress that stopped at a well-shaped knee, mincing past on three-inch spiked heels. The heads of all the assembled males swivelled in unison. After that it was my job to convince her that we weren't "putting her on" but really wanted her to act in a film.

At least half of the film takes place in the streets of Harlem, which, day or night, are never still. Anything unusual going on will draw a very articulate crowd; and, as in any tightly-knit, over-crowded city slum, there is a kind of underground resistance movement with its own intelligence network spreading over a large area. It was crucial, of course, that the hostility of the neighbourhood should not be aroused by our presence. Our first emissary was a roving cameraman who worked alone or with one assistant, shooting random footage



"The Cool World". Photograph by Leroy McClucas.

at odd hours of the day and night. At first he was regarded with deep suspicion; once he was roughed up, although he wasn't certain whether his attacker was more interested in not being photographed or in trying to steal the camera. After that, diplomatic aid was enlisted from an accepted resident of the block, the cameraman was introduced to a few strategic people, and the grapevine took care of the rest.

When a larger crew plus actors moved into the area we had an additional problem. In order to film anywhere on the city streets, a permit is required. This is obtainable without difficulty from an amiable and efficient lady who is co-ordinator of commercial photography for the Department of Commerce and Industrial Development. She then must circulate copies to the Department of Buildings, Department of Water Supply, Gas and Electricity, and to the Police. The Police, in turn, notify the local Precinct Station, who alert squad cars to keep an eye on things. In an area of the city that is already heavily patrolled, the arrival of additional policemen is not enthusiastically received. On several occasions we resorted to devices that might be legally misinterpreted in order to be unobtrusive so far as the local population was concerned.

The simple reality of the location made it impossible to ignore what was going on. Gang fights, drunkenness, dope-peddling and an occasional homicide are common. The fact that the production crew was mixed, Negro and white, caused comment—often very witty—even from politically dispassionate onlookers. In areas where political sympathies ran more along black supremacy lines the situation was frequently touchy. And on every hand there were the store-front churches of a myriad of fundamentalist religious sects, many of whom condemn movies as the work of the devil.

The street-shooting was always fascinating, sometimes tense, sometimes very funny. In addition to the high-level diplomatic problems already mentioned, there was naturally a constant progression of immediate crises, like having to haggle over the price of prop water-melons made off with by the cast while the director's eagle eye was elsewhere, keeping some kind of orderly dispensation of favours to the troop of small self-appointed helpers who adopted us, worrying about the health of younger members of the cast, who preferred a diet of hot-dogs and soda pop to almost anything else, and explaining to various people that we were (a) not in the refrigeration

business, or (b) wanting permissions in order to shoot TV commercials about air conditioners.

It was with some relief that we moved inside to do the interiors with some privacy. It had been decided to use real locations here, too, instead of going into a studio, and now we had unexpected help from the City Housing Authority, who were enthusiastic about the film and extremely co-operative. They gave us a list of sites scheduled for demolition to make way for new housing projects. We were allowed the use of an entire tenement building which could be remodelled in any way we wanted.

The set designer started to work in one apartment before the last families had left the building. No sooner had they moved, however, than the neighbourhood grapevine was in operation and vandals would break in to steal anything movable that could be sold for scrap. Again a combination of security measures within the building plus diplomatic beachheads established in the neighbourhood seemed to work, and we were allowed to carry on in relative peace. The only hazard towards the end was whether we'd be able to finish before bulldozers began to gnaw at the building. We made it with a week to spare.

One thing is certain: as a result of our experience in shooting the film all of us now look at the city with new eyes. If the screen version has the same effect on its audience, a hot summer in the cool world will have been well worth the effort.

You Can't Do Such Things, Comrades

"WE ADHERE TO CLASS positions in art and resolutely oppose peaceful coexistence between the socialist and capitalist ideologies. Art belongs to the sphere of ideology . . . Abstractionism and formalism, whose right to a place in socialist art is advocated by some of their champions, are forms of capitalist ideology . . ." Mr. Khrushchev's speech of March 8th on the arts, from which this is a quotation, attracted the widest attention and comment in so far as it related to literature and the graphic arts. It hasn't been so generally recognised, however, that the Soviet premier was equally concerned to call Russian film-makers to task. Khrushchev's speech is a key document in Soviet affairs, revealing at once the limits of the "thaw" policy as far as the arts are concerned, and some of the tensions and problems among Russian artists. For the record, we quote some of the passages on the cinema.

"We cannot remain indifferent to the ideological trend of cinema

art or to the artistic merits of pictures shown on the screen. In this respect the state of affairs in the cinema is far from being as good as many film-makers imagine . . . We have been given a preview of the material for a picture bearing the title *Ilyich Zastava* . . . made by Comrade Khutsiyev at the Gorky Film Studios under the art direction of Comrade Sergei Gerasimov. One must say quite frankly that there are some moving sequences. But, in fact, they serve to cover up the real meaning of the film, which is to assert ideas and standards of public and private life which the Soviet people cannot accept but regard as alien . . . The intention was to give a negative picture and criticise trenchantly the idlers and semi-degenerate characters, who love and respect no one, who are still to be encountered among our young people . . . [But] the makers of the film lacked the civic courage and anger to stigmatise and pillory such degenerates and scum . . .

"I remarked yesterday that the sequence in which the hero meets the shade of his father who was killed in the war provokes grave objections on points of principle. When the son asks the ghost how he ought to live, it in turn asks the son how old he is. Hearing the son say 23, the father says he is 21 . . . and vanishes. Do you really want us to believe that such a thing could be true? No one will ever believe that! It is common knowledge that even animals don't abandon their offspring . . . There is more to this than meets the eye. There is a definite meaning to this. The idea is to impress upon the sons that their fathers cannot teach them in life, that there is no point in asking them for advice. In the opinion of the film-makers, young people ought to decide by themselves how they should live, without asking their elders for advice and help . . . [But] in Soviet socialist society there are no contradictions between generations. There is no 'father and son' problem in its old sense. It has been invented by the makers of the film and artificially inflated with not the best of intentions.

"This is the way in which we understand the relations between people in our society, and we want these relations to be truthfully portrayed in works of literature, in plays, films, in music and painting. Let those who still do not understand this stop to think about it. We shall help them to adopt the correct position . . . The film's grave errors are self-evident. One would have thought that the film-makers who saw it would have told its director so quite frankly and bluntly. However, some incredible things have started around it . . . A great campaign to boost it as the most outstanding and 'extraordinary event in our art' was started on an international scale. Why was that necessary? You can't do such things, comrades, you simply can't!"

The Malibu Project

PENELOPE HOUSTON writes: One of the big problems for Hollywood's business men during the last decade has been the question of what to do with their studios. Built thirty or forty years ago, when studio production was running at a much higher level than it has been since television, old-fashioned as well as expensive to operate, so that production overheads are forced up, they have become liabilities which in a booming California might be converted into real-estate assets. Fox some time ago sold 260 acres of its Westwood Studios as the site for a new housing development, Century City, retaining only 75 acres for its own operations. Fox, M-G-M and Columbia, between them, have at present only four pictures in active production at their Hollywood studios: M-G-M's *Sunday in New York*, with Jane Fonda and Rod Taylor, Fox's *Take Her, She's Mine*, with James Stewart and Sandra Dee, and Columbia's *Fail Safe* and *Under the Yum Yum Tree*.

"The most important announcement ever to come out of Hollywood," to quote the press hand-out, was made in May, when Robert H. O'Brien, the new president of M-G-M, Darryl Zanuck, head of 20th Century-Fox, and Abe Schneider, president of Columbia, disclosed their joint plan to construct an enormous new studio. The most probable site: a 2,500 acre ranch at Malibu, already owned by Fox, and presenting "a varying topography and diverse tree growth which will promote simulation in photography of practically any environment in the world." Other assets of the ranch, according to *Variety*, include a lake constructed at a cost of \$700,000 for *Cleopatra*.

Details of the plan remain to be announced, including its cost (which has been estimated in the press at \$80 million, or only twice the cost of *Cleopatra*) and the date when the new studio might



Dirk Bogarde and James Fox in Joseph Losey's "The Servant", scripted by Harold Pinter from the novel by Robin Maugham.

conceivably be completed. But the project suggests both a new conception of "rationalisation" (the film industry's favourite word for its policies of counter-attack) and a determination to make a grand and symbolic gesture of confidence in Hollywood's development, even if this would continue at some distance from Hollywood itself. The stress on the adaptability of the proposed locale also indicates a hope that some "runaway" producers may be lured back from Europe; and the announcement emphasises that the studio would be available to independent producers as well as to its proprietors. The background to the decision is the expensive and unhappy history of recent years: Fox's declared loss of more than forty million dollars on production, M-G-M's decision to write off heavy losses on *Mutiny on the Bounty*. The new studio project sounds not only like a dream of an ultra-efficient future, but a strong bid by the business men to recapture control of their industry.

Italian Notes

GIULIO CESARE CASTELLO writes: It seems that the "fat years" in the Italian cinema are over, and the crisis everyone had feared is now upon us. Some production and distribution companies have already collapsed or gone into liquidation; others have suspended production in order to avoid worse troubles than they have at present. As might have been expected, the first casualties are likely to be among the young directors. Their product, according to Goffredo Lombardo, the president of Titanus, "has in many cases been a mistake: it has won prizes and excellent reviews, and brought in very little at the box-office." In fact, it ought to be remembered, many of their films were cheaply made and brought financial returns from abroad which they failed to achieve at home.

Things being as they are, however, many talented young directors (and some not so young) are now idle. They are counting the cost of a policy of senseless over-production, which resulted in far too many bad films destined for a ruinous commercial release. Over-production also brought spiralling costs with it, making the recovery of capital investment increasingly difficult. Now the rate of work has been slowed down. Projects which seemed certainties have been held up, among them Antonioni's *Il Deserto Rosso*, for which financial backing from the Banca Nazionale del Lavoro failed at the last moment, and Pasolini's *Il Padre Selvaggio*.

Of the producers still in business, Carlo Ponti has announced an ambitious programme. He is at present working on *Le Mépris*, directed by Jean-Luc Godard, based on a Moravia novel, and starring Brigitte Bardot. Dino De Laurentiis is preparing the monumental Bible film, with Orson Welles, Visconti and Bresson, and is meanwhile producing *Il Boom*, a costume comedy written by Zavattini, directed by De Sica and starring Alberto Sordi. Among the more prominent directors still working are Francesco Rosi (on *Le Mani sulla Città*, about building speculation in Naples) and Mario Monicelli (*I Compagni*, a comedy about the first strikes in northern Italy at the time of the birth of Socialism). Awaiting editing are Renato Castellani's *Mare Matto* (with Lollobrigida and Belmondo) and *I Misteri di Roma*, an interview film devised by Zavattini with the help of a group of young directors.

The 1962/63 season has had its highlights—*The Leopard*, *Eight and a Half*, *Four Days in Naples*, Lizzani's *Il Processo di Verona*, Olmi's *I Fidanzati*, the Pasolini episode in *Rogopag*. Among the compilation films, *La Rabbia* has a sequence put together by Pasolini which provides a sensitive and poetic, if biased, view of the post-war years. A season of achievement, all things considered. But these were all produced during the good times. What will the lean years bring?

Buñuel's *Tristana*

FRANCISCO ARANDA writes: The filming of *Tristana*, the new production by Luis Buñuel, has been banned in Madrid. The famous Spanish director had received all kinds of encouragement from the national cinema organisation to make another film after *Viridiana*, with promises of assistance. Set Number Four at the Sevilla Studio was hired, Italian artists contracted, technical and artistic casting completed, all exteriors chosen. Then, in May, the ban was imposed. The Censorship Department says that the script offends against Article No. 8, paragraphs 4 and 8 (section one) of its Code, which says that no film will be permitted in which duels are encouraged or justified.

Obviously, Buñuel does not justify duels in his script! The plot involves a duel, which helps us to see how anachronistic was the old Don Juan lover of *Tristana*—according, that is, to the novel written at the beginning of the century by the Spanish author Galdós.



François Truffaut, Luis Buñuel, Jeanne Moreau and Albert Finney, recipients of "Crystal Star" awards from the French Film Academy.

Buñuel's script was extremely correct in relation to the Censorship Code, and it seems evident that this pretext was chosen in the absence of a better one. The ban has cost the producers a good deal of money and Buñuel a good deal of work. *Tristana* will now be made in Mexico, with the collaboration of the Spanish producers. Meanwhile Buñuel remains in Madrid, preparing *Le Journal d'une Femme de Chambre*, a new adaptation of the book by Mirbeau, which he intends to film later this year in Paris.

Work in Progress

Great Britain

CLIVE DONNER: *Nothing But the Best*, a comedy about ambition from script by the novelist Frederic Raphael. With Alan Bates and Millicent Martin. Production by Anglo Amalgamated, for release through Warner-Pathé.

PETER GLENVILLE: *Becket*, from the play by Jean Anouilh, with Richard Burton and Peter O'Toole playing archbishop and king. A Hal Wallis production, for Paramount.

KAREL REISZ: a new adaptation of Emyln Williams' *Night Must Fall*, scripted by Clive Exton. Albert Finney plays the psychopathic page boy, Robert Montgomery's part in the 1937 version. For M-G-M.

TERENCE YOUNG: *From Russia, with Love*, second of the James Bond films, with Sean Connery, Pedro Armendariz, Daniela Bianchi, and (as chief villainess) Lotte Lenya. Eon Productions, for release through United Artists.

United States

ROBERT ALDRICH: *A Western, Four for Texas*, with Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Anita Ekberg. For release through Warners.

JULES DASSIN: *The Man in the Middle*, adaptation of Eric Ambler's novel *The Light of Day*, about a Greek car-hire driver who becomes involved in international intrigue. With Peter Ustinov and Melina Mercouri; to be filmed in Greece, for release through United Artists.

JOHN FRANKENHEIMER: *Seven Days in May*, adaptation of a recent American best-seller about a political crisis. With Kirk Douglas, Burt Lancaster and Fredric March. A Seven Arts production for release through Paramount.

OTTO PREMINGER: *The Cardinal*, story about a young priest's rise in the hierarchy of the Church. With Tom Tryon, Romy Schneider, Carol Lynley, Burgess Meredith, Dorothy Gish, and John Huston, cast by Preminger as a cardinal. Gamma Productions, for release through Columbia.

FESTIVALS



Ermanno Olmi's "I Fidanzati".

Cannes

EVERYONE KNOWS BY NOW that *The Birds* came to Cannes on the opening night this year. The audience shrieked at all the right moments and applauded Tippi Hedren's escape after the final attack; *Cahiers* and *Movie* went to every subsequent showing; and Hitchcock looked quite pleased with himself. But what does it all add up to? Nobody can belittle the terrifying way in which the bird sequences are handled—especially the attacks down the chimney and in the town square—yet the film's advocates were also hinting at a deeper symbolic meaning: an allegory on the end of the world, the birds' revenge on civilisation, etc. For me it doesn't quite work that way, mainly because the human protagonists fit too neatly into a glib psychological pattern and, more crucially, because the birds, in spite of the fierceness of their behaviour, remain just birds. Somehow, the extra bit of alchemy which might have pushed the film on to another plane is missing. And, judging from his witty yet evasive answers at his press conference, Hitchcock seemed prepared to agree with each and any interpretation.

After catching only fleeting glimpses of the master's back, I finally managed to track him down at a party given by Technicolor. "And who is making films in England now?" he drawled. I mentioned the customary names. "But who is teaching them to make Pure Cinema?" I was forced to mutter "probably no one", but countered by suggesting that this was

perhaps the prerogative of the Old Guard. "Ah, yes," he said, "they should teach them how to handle camera and cutting: Pure Cinema is knowing how to do things." And, of course, he's right.

In a generally blood-soaked festival, *Hara-kiri* by Kobayashi went further than any other film in testing the audience's powers of resistance. Undoubtedly a fierce and passionately felt attack on old Japanese militarist ethics, it compromises itself by trying to have it both ways. The lengthy disemboweling sequence with a bamboo dagger shocks and horrifies, yet the subsequent mass slaughter (with Nakadai outdoing Mifune in sheer killing power) was too exciting in a conventional sense and rather ludicrous into the bargain. Kobayashi's ponderous camera style, with its slow trackings and panning, increased the impression of heavy would-be significance.

Charming semi-alfresco Japanese party damped by sudden downpour. Rain (and possibly film) seemed to drive guests to a great frenzy of eating. Adolfo Mekas, at late-night café, adds the day's deaths to a festival obituary he is keeping: knife wounds and strangulations head the list at the moment.

Another Japanese film, Hiroshi Teshigahara's *The Pitfall*, turned up in the programmes organised by the French critics. A kind of political murder story, in which the victims return as ghosts to torment their accusers, it mixes its styles in a way only the Japanese cinema seems able to risk. The results may be confusing, but the visual imagery is continually stunning—as in the menace-laden scene of a man being pursued by a

white-coated assassin down an endless mountain road, all shot in one take.

The best of a rather heavy East European bunch were Henri Colpi's Franco-Rumanian *Codine* and Wojciech Has's *How to Be Loved*. Although beautifully shot in soft colour and with a good deal of atmosphere (19th century village life; a cholera epidemic; a blood-brother relationship between a noble brute and a young boy), *Codine* seemed a strange subject for Colpi to take. At its worst, it looked like a Rumanian film; at other times the mood held and it became eloquent, though never quite robust enough. Has's film, on the other hand, is all ambiguous half-tones, full of Polish pain and anguished questions from the past. But if one stayed with it (and an extremely dark print at Cannes did not make things easier), Has's slow, Resnais-influenced methods eventually built up a compelling portrait of an actress, accused of collaboration during the war, who re-thinks her life during a plane journey and ends up tarnished yet unbeaten. I suspect that a second viewing, under better conditions, might clarify and improve on one's initial reactions.

Spotlight on another actress. Bette Davis seems genuinely touched and surprised as a great crowd of cheering pressmen and photographers surge forward as she enters for the Baby Jane showing. Behind me, Lindsay Anderson mutters "there goes a bit of the cinema, still triumphant." Later, at Aldrich's press conference, she remains silent until he mentions how nice it was to work with her. "Merci, Mister Aldrich," she bellows, in her best Baby Jane voice.

Fleeing from the ill-chosen official French entries, it was possible to find solace in the town. Jacques Demy's *La Baie des Anges* looks deceptively simple: beautiful, cool shooting in Cannes and Nice, a nice performance by a newcomer, Claude Mann, and a florid one by Jeanne Moreau, as a compulsive blonde gambler. Demy is most successful when communicating the experience of winning or losing large sums of money in matters of seconds; and he also hints, tentatively, at something more. As the roulette wheel spins, the music begins in the manner of *Pickpocket*, and you can make your own connections. Compared with many of the festival entries, this is a film made without fuss; and yet the invention flows throughout.

Great proliferation of other trade shows in town aggravated by lack of information on nationality and original titles. Usual abundance of West German pictures with six word titles. Taking lucky dip at one cinema, I try to go upstairs and am stopped by startled usherette crying "but m'sieur, there's no one else there." She seems surprised when I say I don't mind.

If any single country imposed a personality on the festival this year, it was Italy. Ambitious and varied, all four Italian entries were worth seeing and were equally divided between established and relatively new names. Marco Ferreri's *Queen Bee* was as erratic in direction as was his Spanish *El Cohechito*, and went in for the rather easy anti-religious jokes which were another festival fashion. Yet it has the core of a genuinely macabre comic idea: a middle-aged husband, wary of his sexual prowess, is slowly hounded to death by his vampirical young bride. Though it showed obvious signs of having been cut at the last minute, Ferreri's fable is like a blacker version of *Divorce—Italian Style*, and is brilliantly played by Ugo Tognazzi (blinking and shambling from one humiliation to another) and Marina Vlady, who is given some marvellous, devouring close-ups. The trouble is that, at the end, one is not quite sure what Ferreri is attacking—is it possessive Italian womanhood in particular or the social system in general? Perhaps this is another case of a film having a local meaning which is unclear to foreign observers: at any rate, and despite its many merits, the film remains something of a puzzle.

Finally, Visconti's *The Leopard*, winner of the Grand Prix and the festival's longest and most expensive entry. In a way,

it symbolises the end of a long journey Visconti has made from the grandiose neo-realism of *La Terra Trema* to the operatic *verismo* of *Senso* and *Rocco*. *The Leopard* is not only a requiem for the past; it is also a celebration of a sensual world of high living and de-personalised ritual as recollected and experienced by a contemporary political artist. And, in some ways, Visconti allies himself with the old Prince of Sicily (a dignified, assured performance by a dubbed Burt Lancaster), whose decline is symbolised by a long and magnificent ballroom sequence which could only have been made possible by unlimited money and resources. This, then, is Visconti's most decorative and over-indulged work, alternately boring and seductive, cool yet passionate, and staged with a painter's eye for detail and colour. It is a rich and troubling film; and for its director either an apotheosis or a point of departure.

JOHN GILLET

IF THE BIG FESTIVALS still have any use—and I think they do—it is to introduce films by new talents and to keep one up to date with the latest works by the recognised masters. Although it was generally agreed that Cannes this year was pretty much of a wash-out, the festival did introduce a few new men, and it confirmed at least two talents. Which made it worth the trip.

The Hungarian entry, *A Cosy Cottage*, was directed by one Tamas Fejer. This was his fifth film, and he is 42 years old. However, *A Cosy Cottage* created a sensation in Hungarian film circles, because, as the Hungarofilm bulletin bluntly put it, his previous four films were not very successful. It is all too easy to get carried away by a film from an Iron Curtain country which is set not amongst the workers but in the managerial class, and which deals not with poverty and social injustice but with the subtlest of emotional problems. Nevertheless, I feel that *A Cosy Cottage* (the French title is surely better: *Une Rue Comme Il Faut*) is a considerable achievement. "Poor man's Antonioni," said its detractors; one sees, however, what they meant. A young wife (Margit Bara), regretting her lost independence and her husband's success and complacency, is seduced by a visiting inspector from the capital. He, too, is married; he, too, has made a success of his life;



Kobayashi's "Hara-Kiri".



Hitchcock's "The Birds".

he, too, is bored to death. Their brief affair provokes the wife to give up her comfortable villa, modern appliances, and built-in husband. But love is not the solution: she must work out her salvation alone. The film is discreet, subtly acted, and directed with remarkable finesse: the handling of Margit Bara in the morning-after-the-seduction sequence is exemplary.

On the very last night of the festival, we saw *Ouranos* (*The Sky*), a Greek war film. I say "we", but the audience was very thin, and got still thinner as time went on. And yet, *Ouranos* (directed by an ex-assistant of Cacoyannis, Takis Kanelopoulos) was one of the most exciting screen débuts in a long time. Exciting is not really the word, for *Ouranos* is played in a minor key, or, to change the metaphor, in an elegiac mode. Five soldiers go off to fight the Italians in 1940. Some are killed; the rest are forced by the arrival of the Germans to retreat, and finally to disband. The film is composed with little scenes—incidents of no great importance, yet which, put together, make up a desolate and moving study of war. A young soldier flirts with a peasant girl; another is killed while drinking from a brook. Unemphatic, restrained, and lyrical, *Ouranos* is also beautifully but unobtrusively photographed, and is accompanied by an extremely evocative music score.

So much for the discoveries: I do not think that *Les Abysses* augurs very well for the future of its director, Nico Papatakis. One was automatically prejudiced in favour of the film because of the campaign against it by a group of French producers. They claimed that this kind of difficult film was ruining the cinema, and that festival entries should be films which are more accessible to the general public. The case against them was partly proved by the other two French entries (*Le Rat d'Amérique* and *Carambolages*), films as commercial as they come and really terrible. Nevertheless, all this does not make *Les Abysses* a masterpiece. The idea behind it is interesting, and so is the scenario by Jean Vauthier. Based, like Genet's *The Maids*, on the famous Soeurs Papin trial of the Thirties, *Les Abysses* is set in a farmhouse near Limoges which makes those Mauriac households look like so many Edwardian summer-houses. Two long-exploited maids turn on their employers and slash them to death. In its best scenes, *Les Abysses* does rise to paroxysmal heights of anarchy and rebellion not scaled since the great days of Mack Sennett. I could accept the amateurishness of the direction, but for me the film failed ultimately because the two actresses playing the sisters are just that—two actresses, as unconvincing as Bette Davis and Joan Crawford in *Baby Jane*. Perhaps on a stage they could have got away with it, but the camera is, as they say, cruel.

Ermanno Olmi's new film shows that *Il Posto* was not just a flash in the pan. *I Fidanzati* bears all the marks of the transitional work, and although inevitably less perfect than *Il Posto*, it is to me even more fascinating. Though the story is plain—a long-engaged working-class couple is forced to separate for eighteen months, while the man is posted to Sicily with a better job and a rise in status—the conception of the film is far from simple. Avoiding the traditional forms of narration, Olmi juggles most effectively with space and time: the film seems to be set in an eternal present, alternating between Giovanni's exile in Sicily and Liliana's long wait in the North. At the same time, the film is also a documentary on the contrast between the new and the old Sicily. Much more ambitious than *Il Posto*, as you can see. And also much more beautiful. *Time Stood Still* was the title of Olmi's early documentary feature, and in *I Fidanzati* he succeeds in capturing moments of time in an almost Proustian manner.

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Last year the French Critics' Association inaugurated a programme of films by young directors; next year, we are told, it will become an official part of the festival. Of the nine films shown this year, only two were really first-rate; three more were quite interesting; and the last four seemed to me to have no place in such a setting. If the Critics' Week is going to be an integral part of the festival, it ought to choose its films with a little more rigour and a little less political sentimentality. For example, *Pelle Viva*, the Italian film, and *Porto das Caixas* from Brazil were both well-meaning exposés of working class problems in those countries, but had very little, I felt, to do with the art of the cinema. This is perhaps a mandarin view; so be it. On the other hand, the Belgian film *Déjà s'Envole la Fleur Maigre*, which deals with the life of Italian miners in the Borinage district of Belgium, goes beyond documentary realism to achieve a really poetic climate of *dépaysement*. Like Brecht, his avowed master, Paul Meyer has aimed at a synthesis of poetry and truth. The Swedish film, *The Baby Carriage*, was directed by a young newcomer called Bo Widerberg, and in spite of its disturbingly "new wave" beginning it is quite a solid affair, freshly felt and rendered.

But the two revelations of the Critics' Week were Chris Marker's *Le Joli Mai* and Adolfo Mekas' *Hallelujah the Hills*. Revelation is perhaps not the word for Marker, but *Le Joli Mai* is by its length alone (2½ hours) his most important work. It sounds like *cinéma-vérité*: a series of interviews with Parisians on their reactions to the events of May, 1962: the Salan trial, the anti-OAS riots, etc. But Marker, like Pontius Pilate, does not pretend to know what truth is. His truth, yes; but truth, no. He has a point of view, and it is expressed in the film. But what is so extraordinary is that even those interviewees whose views are least sympathetic to him come out as recognisable human beings. Indeed, silly young girls from the Avenue Matignon are treated with as much respect as the ex-worker priest. Furthermore, the linking sequences show us Paris as we have never seen it before: now an ant-hill covered with bustling grubs, and now (in the funeral of the OAS victims) a tragic stage worthy of Epidauros. *Le Joli Mai* is one of those rare films which force one to reconsider one's ideas of what the cinema is all about.

Hallelujah the Hills does the same thing. Directed by Adolfo Mekas, one of the founders and editors of *Film Culture*, this is one of the weirdest concoctions ever made. Two young men, Jack and Leo, are both courting the same girl. For seven long years, they persist, but she finally gives herself to the "horrible Gideon". In a sense, just as this is the pretext for the film, so the courtship of Vera is a pretext for Jack and Leo to camp out together in the Vermont woods near her home, and to indulge themselves in the wildest of horse-play and high jinks. The film has a Griffithian flavour, a lyrical naïveté, which is extremely touching. At the same time it is full of sophisticated film parodies—*Rashomon*, the New Wave, Douglas Fairbanks, *Ma and Pa Kettle*. In short,

this is one of the most completely American films ever made, in its combination of anarchistic wackiness with a nostalgic sense of the lost frontier and (maybe they're both the same) the magic of youth. It is perhaps significant that Mekas was not born in America. He sees it with the fresh eye of Fitzgerald's Dutchmen sailing into what was to become New York Harbour: for the last time, perhaps, in human history, man found himself face to face with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder.

RICHARD ROUD

Mar del Plata

WHAT SPECIALLY DISTINGUISHES the annual festival at Mar del Plata is that the Argentinians are the most authentic and cosmopolitan *cinéastes* in the world. The inhabitants of Buenos Aires know far more of European and American cinema than London audiences. One of the tourist sights of the capital is a street of cinemas showing films from every part of the world. Nor are they patronised by specialist minorities: *L'Avventura* ran successfully for months in a 1500-seater cinema. It may well be that the particular enthusiasm for foreign and especially European culture (it is not confined to the cinema) arises from an almost morbid inclination among Argentinians to apologise for not being European, a constant feeling of being rather on the edge of things. As a side-effect of this, it is significant that when Brazilians (who seem much the most culturally self-sufficient of Latin-Americans) attack the Argentinian cinema, it is on the grounds that it is too Europeanised; and it is true that some of the new Argentinian film-makers seem particularly vulnerable to the influences of new activity in Europe.

Still, the whole atmosphere of the festival is very stimulating to European film-people: the two-week house-party at the Hermitage Hotel, with everyone talking pictures for nearly twenty-four hours of the day; the shrewd and sophisticated cinema reviews; the tireless crowds, who are so hungry for film personalities that they will even mob critics to get their autographs. That is why it seems so unjust that, in the words of Lotte Eisner, "Mar del Plata has the best people but the worst films." European producers, if they do not underrate this busy international festival, at best consistently miscalculate the kind of films they enter here. At least it seemed that this year the Argentinians got the second-best films.

It is true that the Grand Prix winner, *Land of Angels*, would have stood up well in better company. It is based on a novel of the 1920s by Lajos Kassak, which relates an incident in Budapest in 1912 when the tenants of a tenement building struck against exorbitant rents. Lightweight perhaps at a philosophical or political level, it is a film of real technical virtuosity. Every scene and shot and cut is calculated with a thrilling precision; and yet with all this technical brio, one is still persuaded of its authentic human values. The director is Georgy Revecs, previously known as the director of half a dozen films, of which the only one seen here, *At Midnight*, hardly promised the accomplishment of his latest work. The Grand Prix was a useful vindication of the festival's independence, against those who feared that the political climate of the country would prejudice the chances of a film on so uncompromising a revolutionary theme.

Britain's representation was game; and *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* carried off four prizes—special awards by both the Grand and Critics' Juries, and awards from both juries for the playing of Tom Courtenay, who was personally one of the most successful delegates to the festival. Courtenay's resolutely anti-vedette personality contrasted to advantage with the calculated self-exploitation of experts like George Hamilton and Thomas Fritsch, the young German star of

Marco Ferreri's "Queen Bee".



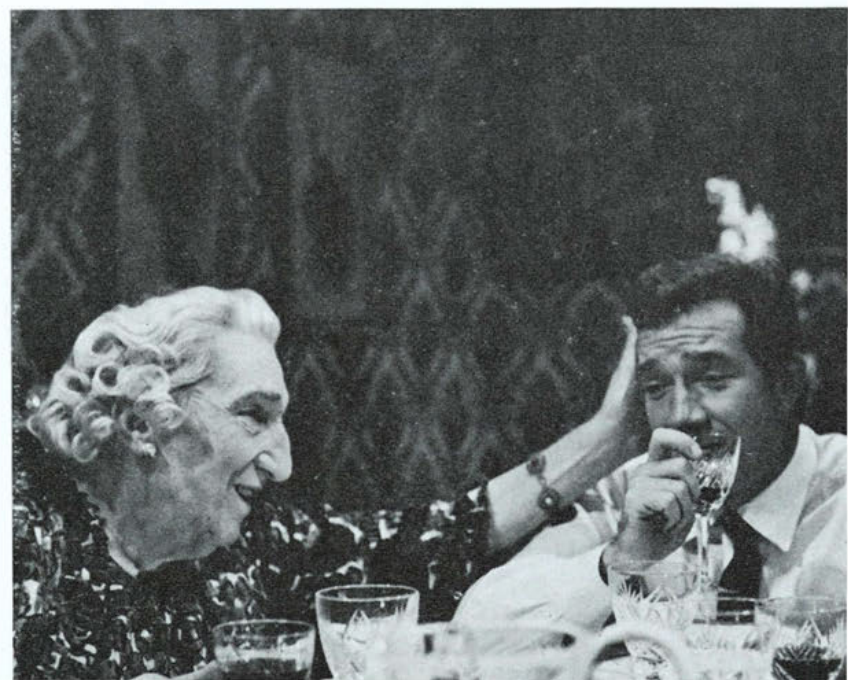
Papatakis' "Les Abysses".

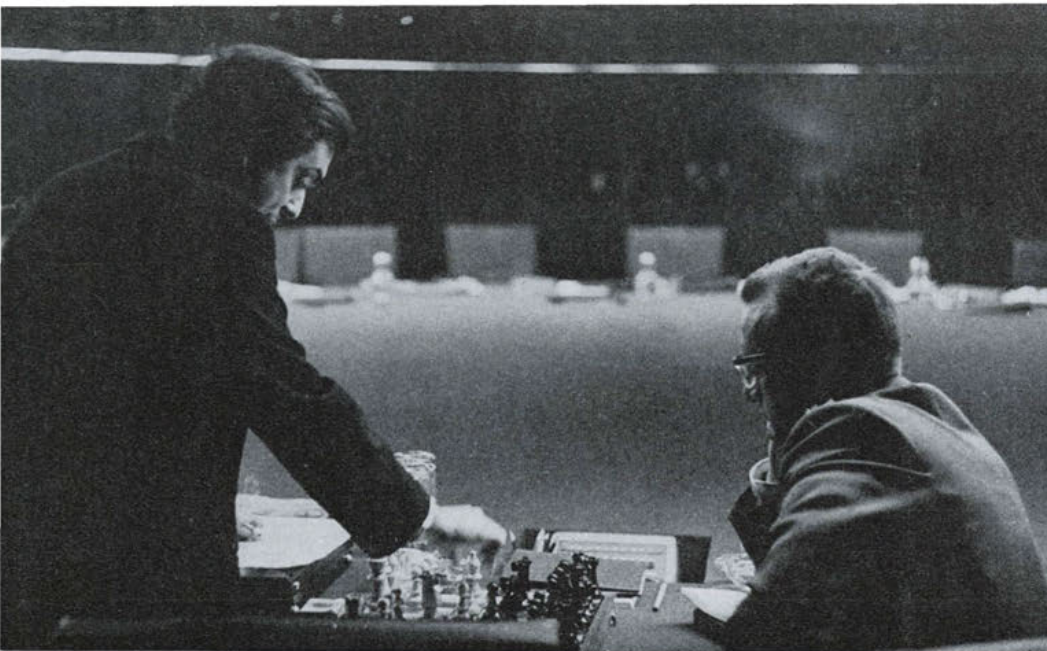
Rolf Thiele's aptly titled comedy, *Delicious Youth*, a film whose efforts after style did not conceal its essential lack of wit or charm. It made a better showing, all the same, than the other German entry, a lumbering comedy with Maria Schell, challengingly entitled *I Also Am a Woman*.

Italy's two entries both rested heavily on their principal players. In Dino Risi's *Il Sorpasso*, Vittorio Gassman's showy interpretation of a playboy was a favourite contender for the actor's award. Catherine Spaak's delicious playing in Pietrangeli's *La Parmigiana*, as a country girl whose innocent career of seduction progresses from a theological student to a policeman, would have been a better choice for the Best Actress prize than the star of the Polish entry *Voice from Beyond*—a miscalculated realisation of an ingenious script about a fake medium and a medical charlatan who effectively clean up other people's fortunes.

Spain sent an Antonioniesque first film, Jorge Grau's *Noche de Verano*, and Brazil an intriguing modern treasure-island tale, Walter Khouiri's *The Island*. But for the most part this was a festival of unsuitable selections. The aims of Jean-Pierre Melville's pastiche gangster movie, *Le Doulos*, quite by-passed the audience. The demerits of John Cassavetes' well-intentioned but terrible *A Child is Waiting* did not. And it was unfortunate that what was arguably the worst film in competition should be the home entry, Luis Saslavsky's *Las Ratas*. A nineteen-fortyish middle-class melodrama of love and murder seemed a poor representation for a cinema as lively as the contemporary Argentinian (even allowing for current economic difficulties). Indignation at this unhappy film rather tried the duties of hospitality.

DAVID ROBINSON





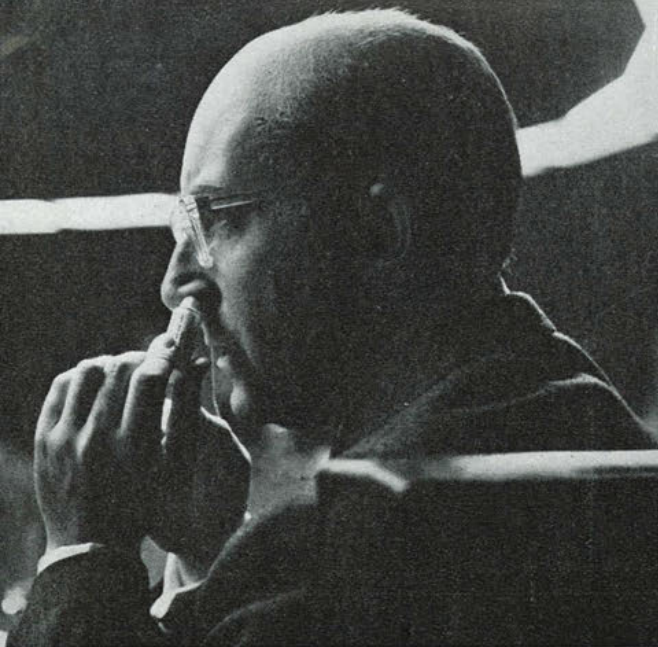
'A nightmare comedy' is Stanley Kubrick's own description of his 'Dr. Strangelove'. A psychotic air force general launches a B-52 attack on Russia, and the President and the Soviet Premier have to collaborate to stave off the consequences. Kubrick has made the film in Britain, as he did 'Lolita', with the main set—the war room at the Pentagon—reconstructed at Shepperton.

THIS PAGE: Stanley Kubrick plays chess with George C. Scott on the war room conference table. Below: Peter Sellers, as the President, in the war room.

RIGHT: Sellers as the President, one of the three parts he plays in the film, and with Peter Bull, cast as the Russian Ambassador. Below: Kubrick surveys his set.

DR. STRANGELOVE: OR HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING





& LOVE THE BOMB





A CASE OF ☐ ☐ JOHN FRANCIS LANE ☐ ARTISTIC INFLATION



ROME IS THE NEW HOLLYWOOD' seemed to be the slogan for the Sixties. The successes in 1960 of *La Dolce Vita*, *Two Women*, *Rocco* and *L'Avventura* seemed to pave the way for a never-ending Gold Rush to the Eternal City. Was it possible, everyone asked, that one could make great 'art' films which became international box-office successes? Britain has had something of the same phenomenon with *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* and the subsequent tame results of follow-up productions from the same 'school'. But in Rome there has been a whole series of winners in the wake of *La Dolce Vita*, ranging from *La Notte* (one of last year's biggest successes in Japan) to *Divorce—Italian Style* (which won a Hollywood Oscar for the Best Script), as well as 'difficult' films such as *Salvatore Giuliano* and *L'Eclisse* which have made money in spite of their apparent highbrow appeal. And the Italian sub-industry has been flourishing with the inevitable Maciste films or the latest fad, the *Sexy* genre.

And yet somewhere along the line the "New Hollywood" went off the tracks. The miracle began to fade early last winter, when it became obvious that *Sodom and Gomorrah*, Italy's own *Cleopatra*, was taking no more money in Italian cinemas than the average Maciste, even though one could have made twenty Steve Reeves pictures for the price of *Sodom*. The producer of Aldrich's film, Goffredo Lombardo, suddenly had it driven home to him that the money he was rashly spending on two other colossals, *The Leopard* and *The Condemned of Altona*, wasn't there to spend. The banks cried out in alarm. And when *Altona* did a boomerang on him, it was almost a question of his Titanus company closing up shop.

Lombardo accepts full responsibility for the financial disaster of Titanus. His chief mistake perhaps was that he didn't control every aspect of production and have a firmer hand with his collaborators, both his executive producers and his directors. Take *Altona*, for example. He should have realised that De Sica and Loren were the wrong people to tackle Sartre's penetrating play about the German problem. Carlo Ponti, who was executive producer of *Altona* (and who was therefore spending the money which Lombardo and Fox put up for it) was confident that the Loren-De Sica duo would repeat the success of *Two Women*. Ponti said, "De Sica is the right man to deal with a war subject." But *Altona* is not

about war! Apart from Loren, the casting was excellent. I have only seen the Italian version of the film, so perhaps (as Miss Loren assures me) I saw it at its worst. Certainly, the playing of Fredric March was impressive and both Max Schell and Françoise Prévost gave intelligent performances.

Zavattini and Abby Mann went to great pains to adapt the play into film; and they had a few good ideas. To bring Franz out of his prison and let him see the new Miracle Germany was cinematically an interesting prospect, even if it perhaps weakened the point of the play. But the scene is clumsily directed. Franz wanders down the neon-lit streets of Hamburg, still wearing his tattered Nazi uniform; the people look at him as if he were drunk or had escaped from *Mondo Cane*. He watches a television newsreel in a bar and sees Strauss reviewing the new German army. And outside a theatre he sees large photographs of Hitler, Goebbe's and Himmler—and of Sophia Loren. He wanders into the theatre, and when he sees Arturo Ui gesticulating like Hitler, Franz tells the audience they are all mad. Naturally they think he is part of the show. Sophia Loren's mask-like face as the widow in Brecht's *Arturo Ui* is more expressive than all the long scenes in which she is grappling with the philosophical undertones of Sartre's dialogue in her Neapolitan accent. But the tantalising Brecht scene has no climax. All it conveys to the film's audience is that Franz is raving mad, which is again a betrayal of the real significance of the play.

Altona is a typical example of how Rome is trying to copy the Hollywood formula, and is not getting away with it. De Sica and Zavattini are too sensitive and intelligent to be able to make films in the Kramer or Dearden manner, which set out to deal with a 'problem' but which end by obeying the conventional formulas of commercial cinema. One can see what Ponti was aiming at, backed by men like Joseph Levine (who also made money out of *Two Women*). Sophia Loren won an Oscar for a De Sica film based on a Moravia novel with a Zavattini script; so since Sartre is France's equivalent to Moravia, why shouldn't they have the same success again? And with all that "Oscar" talent? Schell, March, Abby Mann all had Oscars as well as Loren and De Sica. But the leap from a *ciociara* peasant woman to an intellectual Brechtian actress was more than could be expected of any of the greatest actresses in the world today. The Brechtian actress might be able to play the peasant, but it's difficult to expect things to work out the other way round.

Above. "Eight and a Half": Fellini with Annibale Ninchi and Giuditta Rissone (playing Guido's parents). Behind is Sandra Milo.
Left. "The Leopard": the garden at Donnafugata.

De Sica, who nowadays seems to accept directorial assignments as casually as he once accepted acting roles in every other film, deserves most of the creative blame. After all, he is still one of the world's top ten living film-makers. In order to get *Altona* into movement, he and his director of photography, Roberto Gerardi, have captured some magnificent outdoor shots of Hamburg. By far the best thing in the film is the opening, which 'places' March as the head of the Gerlach industrial empire. After having learned from a doctor that he has only a short time to live, Gerlach returns to his shipyards on a barge. A vast dockyard gate opens, dividing the word GER . . . LACH in two. Gerlach stands on the barge, his head held high with pride as the workmen passing on other barges take off their caps in homage to him. He is silhouetted against the background of the new Germany, the one that has been hidden from his 'imprisoned' son.

And at the end of the film, in substitution for the brilliant confrontation between father and son which was the most important scene in the play, the two men drive down to the docks. They stop at a level-crossing and Franz smiles ironically as he sees a goods train with tanks and armoured cars pass by. From the top of a tower overlooking the whole Gerlach empire, Franz shouts the line about taking the responsibility of the century upon his shoulders. Then he and his father come crashing down to their death. In a brilliant last shot, we see the workmen running from all directions to inspect the two corpses which lie in the middle of the vast dock: for a few seconds there is a terrifying glimpse of the futility of man to do anything against the power and corruption of Capital. The 'message' which Zavattini probably wanted to convey is in these scenes; but the film has long since been submerged within the four walls of Franz's room, surrounded by the over-symbolic murals of Italy's leading social

realist Renato Guttuso. This intellectual bogging down of what in the producers' minds was a commercial proposition wrecks the film: the product is in the end neither highbrow nor commercial.

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The Leopard suffers from similar pretensions, though on a much larger scale. The film is proving an enormous box-office success in Italy, and no doubt will do well elsewhere (though one wonders whether Fox are going to worry much about the mere two million dollars they have invested in this film, at a moment when all their concern is for *Cleopatra*). *The Leopard* has won the Grand Prix at Cannes, and some (though not many) ecstatic notices. I am told that the version shown at Cannes was twenty minutes shorter than when the film opened in Rome. The cuts have been made in the Ball scene, which in the original version was almost a third of the whole film.

After seeing the film in the three hour and twenty minute version shown at the Rome premiere, one felt that if it had run two hours it could have been a masterpiece. But on seeing it a second time and thinking the matter over, it seemed clear that the mistake was in the whole conception. First of all, let's consider the question of cost. I remember asking Lombardo how much the film was going to cost—this a few days before production began. He replied, with an affectionate smile in Visconti's direction, "several thousand million lire." In point of fact they only expected it to cost two thousand million (£1,800,000); and it actually cost almost twice as much. And if you challenge Lombardo now, after the banks have stopped all credit to Titanus and forced him to suspend production plans for at least the coming year, he will say, "I don't care. For a producer it is enough to have made one film as great as *The Leopard* in a lifetime." They have been calling *The Leopard* "Italy's *Gone with the Wind*," and not just because of the money that Visconti threw to the wind. The label is fair enough in so far as it is a lush historical romance which the women will cry over. But there are two striking differences: it can't make as much money as *GWTW* did; and whereas Selznick's film never bored one for a minute, Lombardo's is full of yawns. However, ironically enough, this time it is the intellectuals who do the yawning.

On the positive side there is no doubt that Visconti has provided connoisseurs of Sicilian art and folklore with a reference book that will be of eternal value. Lovers of Lampedusa's story will no doubt be delighted to glance through this illustrated guide book to their favourite novel: they'll find everything, from the dog Bendicò to the giggling girls of Palermo society. Giuseppe Rotunno, the director of photography, is a master of his colour camera, and there are some exquisite hues in the Sicilian landscapes and in the palaces of Palermo, or the "Donnafugata" which was invented for the film in the heart of the "dreaded Mafia" country. I travelled by plane and train and car and jeep and on foot to reach the point where Visconti was shooting during one of the hottest weeks of last summer. And the scene which I saw being shot, the hunting expedition by Don Fabrizio and Don Ciccio which resolves into an argument about Sicilian politics, was much more convincing in the open air than it is on the screen, perhaps because Serge Reggiani (who is visually brilliant as Don Ciccio) was dubbed with a most unsuitable voice in the Italian version. But the photography of this scene and indeed of the whole film—excepting the Garibaldi scenes—was magnificent. The Garibaldi episodes were unfortunate. Visconti was here adding something to the book, trying to give us a feeling of the atmosphere in the streets of Palermo when Garibaldi's Red-shirts arrived. But if one recalls the splendid colours and compositions of the Battle of Custoza in *Senso*, it is difficult



"The Condemned of Altona":
Fredric March surveys the Gerlach empire.

to believe that the same director has filmed these brief glimpses of a few Sicilian extras scampering around as if they had strayed from a B-grade Western. Indeed when Alain Delon appears it comes as a shock: one was expecting Audie Murphy.

The novel by Giuseppe Tomasi, Prince of Lampedusa, is not one of the great books of our time, even if it has certainly been a literary phenomenon. In its colourful Italian prose, and even in Archibald Colquhoun's brave translation, *Il Gattopardo* (which should never have been translated as "The Leopard"), this incomplete family chronicle is full of naïvetés which were perhaps to be expected from an amateur writer. The recent discovery that somebody else had written a novel on exactly the same theme and had sent a copy of it to the Prince of Lampedusa some years before he wrote *Il Gattopardo* leads one to suspect that he never really intended it for publication anyway. Certain parts of the novel make one feel that this was just an aristocrat's way of passing his afternoons; and one's reading is jarred by all those references to modern Sicily in his search for metaphors. At one point he even refers to "Eisenstein's pram". If Visconti had been really faithful to Lampedusa's style, he would not have gone to such trouble to tear down all the TV aerials from the roofs of the Palazzi in Palermo! Certainly Visconti and his fellow script-writers (Suso Cecchi d'Amico, Pasquale Festa Campanile, Massimo Franciosa and Enrico Medioli) did the right thing in ending the film after the Ball with the Prince's premonition of death, thus skipping the hurried last chapter with Angelica's marriage and the Prince's death. But one wishes they had done more and had truly expanded the pages of the novel to embrace the whole of Sicily's role in the drama of the Risorgimento.

* * *

The school of Italian film criticism which is headed by Guido Aristarco and his *Cinema Nuovo* group has done its best to exalt Visconti's films as the nearest equivalent to the realist literature of the 19th century. As a follower of Lukacs, Aristarco was naturally impressed that the great Hungarian Marxist should have cited *Il Gattopardo* as one of the few examples of a realist novel in contemporary Western literature. The prospect of Visconti filming the novel was even more tempting: surely it would provide him with the perfect occasion to combine his critical realist approach to the Risorgimento (*Senso*) with his social feelings over Sicily (*La Terra Trema*) and thus excel even these two masterpieces. Unfortunately, things haven't turned out that way, and I am glad to see that Aristarco in an article in *La Stampa* has already confessed his disappointment. The Visconti we get in *The Leopard* is not the one of *La Terra Trema* or *Senso*, but the Visconti of *Boccaccio 70*.

Visconti's private weakness for the baroque, which has become more and more pronounced in recent years (reaching a climax in the production of the Strauss *Salome* at Spoleto the other year, in which Herod's step-daughter did not unveil herself but ten gorgeous youths!), was admissible when he was decorating a triviality in *Boccaccio 70*; in *The Leopard* the material demanded a more serious approach. Visconti is truly "the last decadent," the title I gave him a few years ago and which it has always pleased him enormously to recall. In *Senso* Franz Mahler, the decadent young Austrian who is the object of a Venetian countess's selfish infatuation, was in a sense a grotesque caricature of a society in decline. Visconti may have betrayed a certain sympathy for Franz's world, but the very operative way in which he made Farley Granger act the part proved that he was looking with an objective eye. In *The Leopard* one believes almost too much in the Prince of Salina. Burt Lancaster, whom nobody quite believed would be right for the part, is staggeringly convincing as the robust aristocrat who prophesies (rather incredibly, it must be admitted) the whole shape of Italian history over the century between Garibaldi's landing in Sicily and the American landings in 1943.



"The Leopard": manning the barricades during the fighting around Palermo.

In the long conversation between the Prince and Chevalley, the Piedmontese official who comes to offer Don Fabrizio a seat in the Senate of the new Italian kingdom, one has the key as to where the film went wrong. Don Fabrizio sums up the whole of the author's attitude towards the course of events; and perhaps this is also the viewpoint of Count Luchino Visconti, Milan aristocrat and Italian Communist Party member: "Now even people here are repeating what was written by Proudhon and some German Jew whose name I can't remember, that the bad state of things, here and elsewhere, is all due to feudalism; that it's my fault, as it were. Maybe. But there's been feudalism everywhere, and foreign invasions too . . . The results were different. The reason for the difference must lie in this sense of superiority that dazzles every Sicilian eye, and which we ourselves call pride while in reality it's blindness. For the moment, for a long time to come, there's nothing to be done. I'm sorry; but I cannot lift a finger in politics. It would only get bitten . . ."

Lancaster makes us believe that the Prince of Salina has been born out of his time. But the anachronism is not justified in terms of the puppet figures who make up the 'romance' which is the basis of this novel and film. The trouble is that Visconti has been pretentious enough to treat Lampedusa's novel as if it were *War and Peace*. Tolstoy's characters and his accounts of the Russian campaign were as much a part of his own family chronicle as Lampedusa's 'Salina' family at the time of the Garibaldi campaign. But Tolstoy was also concerned with a great philosophical conception of history; and he used one of history's greatest and most fascinating failures, Napoleon, as illustration to it. I don't want to pursue the parallel too deeply because it wouldn't be fair to Lampedusa: yet in terms of cinema one is entitled to ask Visconti that he go beyond the giggling boys and girls of Salina's family and touch the great historical theme that looms behind the characters.

At the end of Visconti's film we hear the shots of a firing squad as the Prince walks slowly home from the Ball. We know from snippets of conversation overheard during the evening that the execution taking place is of some former Garibaldi Redshirts who have deserted from the new



Visconti directs Burt Lancaster (with Serge Reggiani behind) during a rehearsal of the hunting sequence.

Piedmontese-Sardinian army of King Victor Emmanuel. Unlike the Prince's beloved Tancredi, who has discarded his red shirt and donned the glamorous uniform of the new army, others are still fighting in the hills. Maybe they were bandits, members of the Mafia whose descendants were to recruit Salvatore Giuliano into their campaign for breaking Sicily away from the Italian fatherland. But there is no doubt that Garibaldi's failure, in a different way from Napoleon's, was to leave Italy in the hands of a bourgeoisie that was to contradict the whole motive of the Risorgimento and lay the way open to the nationalism of the second decade of this century, the D'Annunzio epoch in art and the Mussolini epoch in politics. These are things Lampedusa hints at. It was Visconti's duty to give us a wider and deeper glimpse into these events. Instead of lingering on chamber pots and ladies' hats, on young men's thighs and precious *objets d'art*, he might have spent some of Lombardo's money on showing us what really happened in Sicily in the 1860s. What he did to Verga's *Malavoglia* in *La Terra Trema* and to the Boito story in *Senso*, he could have done with *The Leopard*. He has failed to give us anything but a luscious oleograph of the exterior values of a period.

* * *

Many people have felt that Visconti was identifying himself in the Prince of Salina. Fellini's new film, *Eight and a Half*, on the other hand, is openly autobiographical. Fellini admits that he would be autobiographical if he were telling the life story of a sole. At the end of *La Dolce Vita*, the young girl on the beach, the symbol of innocence, fails to communicate to Marcello. Fellini, plagued by reporters about his next film, said he would make a picture which explained what the girl with the Umbrian smile was trying to say to Marcello as he stumbled back to the orgies. Instead of making that film, Fellini has in fact made a film about a director who wants to make that film—and who fails. The film director protagonist of *Eight and a Half* keeps seeing the girl, the image of innocence. She is everywhere: offering him mineral water at the spa where he is taking a cure, in his bedroom to tuck him in at night. And above all she stands out from the pages of the script of the film he is to make but which he cannot begin. Then one day the actress who is being considered for the part

of the girl comes to see him. As Guido talks to her, he realises that he cannot any longer make a film about innocence. The two parts, that of the girl at the fountain and the actress, are both played by Claudia Cardinale, here dubbing herself in Italian for the first time and revealing a voice unattractively raucous in tone. But Fellini wanted just that for his film actress, who, after all, is called Claudia in the film.

This is typical of Fellini's whole attitude to his players and to the human beings around him who provide the living material for his films. He made Anita Ekberg a parody of herself in *La Dolce Vita* (though he told her she was meant to be parodying Gardner); and he did the same to a score of other 'eccentric' Roman types, even to the present writer. In *Eight and a Half* he is more ruthless in the way he exploits people, because here he is dealing with his own relations to them. Fellini suffered agonies in making this film because he was harassed from all sides—by his producers, by the press, by his friends. And he puts them all into the film, showing them harassing a film director in the same way. In reality, Fellini was getting a sort of sadistic satisfaction from this film. Now he is the most tranquil person in the world. "I have made a liberating film," he says joyously. He has been liberated; but what has he given his audience?

On the surface, *Eight and a Half* is a Pirandello-like search for reality: one might call it "A hundred characters in search of a film director." I recently turned out an interview that Fellini gave to the Italian journalist Camilla Cederna in 1960. It is called "Fellini Confesses". The article seems to be the story of *Eight and a Half*, anyway as far as the recollections of childhood and youth go. As in Pirandello's plays, it is never very clear when we are in dreams and when we are in recollection or the present: I am told that for the Italian provinces they are going to tint the dream sequences with sepia so that audiences will not be too mystified by the *Marienbad*-like passage from reality to the world of imagination.

This is an honest film. It was also very courageous. Fellini started making a film which was to cost Rizzoli a lot of money and engage a great number of people in dedicated, if anonymous, activity for a long time. The only person beside himself who knew vaguely what the film was about was Marcello Mastroianni. Fellini would have liked another actor for the part (and I think he *needed* another actor, difficult though it would have been to communicate with someone like Olivier, who would have been the best choice). But his particular relationship with Mastroianni made it possible to create the role as the film was being made. If one never really succeeds in believing in this Guido Anselmi, it is because Mastroianni and Fellini knew him so well that they never quite managed to tell us enough about him, to arouse our sympathy in his life: what did it matter to us whether he made his film or not, whether he left his wife or not? Who is he anyway? Joe Losey? Cocteau? Bergman? Of course, we all know he is Federico Fellini, but I'm afraid that however fond we may be of the director of *I Vitelloni* we are not really deeply concerned about his intellectual and sexual fetishes. Fellini has been too honest, too courageous, too sincere. He has made a film director's notebook, and I am not surprised that directors everywhere (even those who usually hate Fellini's films) love this picture.

Fellini claims that one needs new critical criteria in order to judge a film such as *Eight and a Half*. I suspect that the criteria were found by critics when Joyce wrote his novels and when Pirandello staged his plays. The cinema is lagging far behind. Since Eisenstein, the only artists who have done anything really new in films have been Welles and Antonioni. There was perhaps something new also in *La Dolce Vita*, even though it took us back to the world of Chaplin and Clair. If sometimes one is irritated by the attempts in Britain and France to make us believe that directors such as Hawks and Losey and Aldrich and Ray make great works of art, we are perhaps forgetting that those who make these claims are from a generation which has had the 'cinema' as its university. And maybe these boys are fairer to the cinema than some of us

who make excessive demands of it (and the Italian critics are most guilty of this): we expected Visconti to turn Lampedusa into Tolstoy, we expect the director of *Umberto D.* to be able to solve the "German Problem", we expect Fellini to excel Joyce and Proust.

* * *

At the end of *Eight and a Half*, at a chaotic press conference under the shadow of the space-ship which is to take the survivors of an atomic war to another planet at the end of Guido Anselmi's film, an American woman shouts out, "He's lost. He hasn't anything to say." And this is Fellini's confession. When he has shown us bewitching scenes of childhood memories, we come back to reality to hear Anselmi's script-writer saying: "These scattered episodes aren't enough to make up a film." And all the way through the film we keep coming back to his comments (the voice of the Italian intellectual), anticipating the judgment that critics will make about Fellini's finished film.

At the end of the film, Fellini suddenly improvises a conclusion. Indeed, two weeks before the film opened in Rome he still hadn't made up his mind how to end it. He chose the ending with the clowns, in which Ian Dallas (who was vaguely introduced earlier as Guido's chum from early stages) reappears with his magician's wand and brings all the characters of Guido-Fellini's life into the circus ring. It seems as though Fellini were saying: "Here I am, the director of *La Strada*. That's the real me. I'm a sentimentalist, a believer in magic, an anti-intellectual. Love me, love my film." And love everybody, that's the film's moral. But there is very little love in Fellini's film. You feel touched by three women in Guido's life: by the fat tart on the beach who dances for him and the other kids; by the grotesque soubrette who was obviously Guido's first sexual experience; and by the plump, sugary mistress (delightfully played by Sandra Milo) who consoles him from his chores as a director. These three women are alive. The rest of the characters—even Guido's wife, who is given a strained sensitivity by Anouk Aimée—are caricatures of life. For Italians with a Catholic upbringing (that is for 99 per cent of Italians) there is a lot of nostalgia in the scenes of Guido's tormented college life and in the meetings, the real one and the dream one, with the Cardinal who is staying at the Spa hotel. All these sequences are so magnificently filmed that the breath is hardly left to voice a query as to what they mean. Gianni di Venanzo's black and white photography and Piero Gherardi's sets and costumes provide such visual magic that it seems pointless to make philosophical reservations on the film's content.

Yet the sheer beauty of Fellini's film, like that of Visconti's, is deceiving us. Fellini in his early forties and Visconti in his early fifties both seem tired. They were each making films to please themselves. That is fair enough. Their films have been



"Eight and a Half": Mastroianni and Sandra Milo.

big enough successes for them to have earned this luxury. Yet what disturbs in each case—and the same applies to De Sica—is the pretentiousness of the subject matter. Having set themselves to tackle themes which have awed great men of letters, they proceed to embark on a sort of D'Annunzian artistic holiday. It is like Wilde writing his *Salome*. We are back to the age of Decadence as a literary form; and it is not surprising that Italian critics have had to pull out the names of some of their symbolist poets in order to find comparisons for Fellini's film.

This artistic inflation is quite as serious as the economic inflation which is currently keeping the Italian cinema in a state of perpetual crisis. It has meant that Antonioni could not find backing for his new film because the producers, or their banks, were scared that he too would indulge in these excesses, especially as he had announced the new film would be in colour. One wonders what the "Old Guard" will do next. Visconti, one knows, is going to do the Joseph episode from the Bible. Fellini is *not* going to do the Noah's Ark episode, as had been announced; he is planning a new film of his own, and perhaps the "liberating" experience of *Eight and a Half* will have helped him. De Sica has happily gone back to an original Zavattini story and it looks like an interesting vehicle for Sordi. Antonioni hopes to make *The Red Desert* in the autumn: it appears that Rizzoli, the life-saver of the Italian film industry, has come to his aid. And the directors who are continuing the better traditions of Italian Realism, Germi, Rosi, Loy, Monicelli, Risi, Olmi, etc., are all on the right paths. The "New Hollywood" hasn't toppled completely, and the new De Laurentiis studios will make one feel that it has got solid new foundations—whether justifiably so, time and the Bible alone will be able to tell. And maybe, when we look back on the "Follies" of 1962-63, the liberating films of Fellini, Visconti and De Sica will have served their purpose: a re-dimensioning of the Italian cinema was necessary from the artistic as well as the industrial point of view. And art always seems to thrive on crisis.



"Eight and a Half": behind the exotic hat, the launching apparatus for the space-ship.



THE AQUARIUM

BERNARD PINGAUD

Bernard Pingaud is a young French literary critic and writer on the cinema; an enthusiast alike for Madame de Lafayette (on whom he has written a monograph) and for Antonioni.

BEHIND THE GLASS OF THAT HUGE aquarium which we call the screen the fish-people twist and turn. They talk; they move; and I observe their story as I might observe the words and doings of my neighbour. But it's another kind of story, another spectacle. I am at the cinema. What exactly does that mean?

Firstly—and to begin with the most elementary and obvious point—there is nothing real in what I'm watching. The camerawork affords its illusion of reality, the flow of shots its illusion of movement; but the movement can be interrupted at any moment by a technical hitch, the entire spectacle extinguished by a power breakdown. And of course everyone in the audience recognises this. One doesn't go to the cinema to see the world. Rather, one goes to see images: to see a representation of the world which, however faithful it may be, cannot take the place of the real thing, and which, whether claiming to educate, to alarm, or to illuminate, can do so only through the means of its own shadow figures.

In the cinema, however, it's enough that the lights should

dim, the curtain be pulled back, the screen come to life. As I sit in the cinema, never unaware that that *is* where I am, those clamorous, outsize figures up there on the screen have me firmly and inescapably in their grip. I can walk out, or I can shut my eyes. Nothing compels me to keep watching. But if I do watch, I can't escape the involvement, the sense that what is happening on the screen is proceeding almost as though I were a part of it. Rather: as though I alone were there, as though these characters in the film were speaking and moving with the one object of impressing me, inviting me to bear witness on their behalf at heaven knows what trial. The darkness makes me an accessory to their compulsive, larger-than-life existence. For a moment, coming out of the cinema, I have to readjust myself: there is just that instant when it seems that I'm walking just as whoever it was did on the screen, and that the living world itself has become a show.

Can life in the cinema, then, seem more real than life itself? It can't, because between the image and the reality it represents, between my neighbour on the screen and my neighbour in real life, there is one essential difference: there is no communication. The paradox of the cinema is that those illusory heroes who insist that I watch and listen to them, who force themselves so literally upon me, give me no chance of answering back. There's one sense in which I'm the master of their fate: there can be no spectacle without a spectator. And there is another sense in which everything goes on as though I were not there. An invisible sheet of glass—the screen itself, so

appropriately named—cuts them off from me. They give themselves to me and, simultaneously, they draw back. I can't touch them, test their reality or be a tangible presence to them (as a stranger in a crowd may be to me). They exist, but are not.

It's this element of being and non-being which determines the fundamental *silence* of the cinema. The fact that the actors are talking doesn't affect the situation, since they talk among themselves and not to the listener in the auditorium. They're speaking behind the screen, behind the plate-glass of the aquarium, and the meaning of what they say—not the literal meaning, but that underlying significance which comes through in the presence of any kind of lived reality—eludes me. Put it this way: the actors are talking, while the images themselves remain firmly and obstinately mute. The missing factor, the thing that prevents them from giving me the sense of a lived experience, is neither sound nor the third dimension. No matter how far the illusion of reality is pushed, I still remain a passive observer. And passive is here the key word. The cinema is a kind of test to which the spectator submits—with good grace, naturally; with relish, often—but over which he hasn't the slightest control. It all goes on without him.

From this follows an inevitable consequence: this powerful illusion—all the more powerful in that it leaves us unsatisfied—is also mysterious. The fact that it's impossible to intervene, to alter the image, to do anything whatsoever to change it, as in those dreams where one tries to move and can't, explains both the compulsive quality of the spectacle and its opacity. To look is not necessarily to understand. Perhaps we ought rather to *stop* looking for an instant, or to look in another way, to devise some way of seeing which helps us to come to grips with this problem. And in fact this is pretty much the way we do watch films: far from critical attention being disarmed by the simplicity of what's going on in front of us (these things are here, happening in front of me; what should be easier than to put a name to them and give them a meaning?), the cinema demands the sharpest and most wide-awake attention, an attitude almost of suspicion.

To explain what I mean by suspicion, I can put forward two examples: evidence contained in the reaction of audiences and in the framework of the film itself.

* * *

Nothing is more subjective than the judgment we bring to bear on a film. Two readers may react very differently to the same book; but at least it will be apparent that it *is* the same book. Literary language has its own momentum, fixing the reader's attention and drawing him along with it; if it doesn't achieve this, he shuts the book. One can't remain outside a novel: one can, guided by the voice of the novelist, react in various ways to his injunctions, take one's view of the world constructed through his style, approve or criticise his undertaking, argue about his technique, his subject, his aesthetics. But the discussion presupposes that we have listened to what he has to say, and in listening we are already some way towards understanding. It is on the basis of this common ground among readers that discussion effectively develops. Everyone knows, on the other hand, how easily critical argument on the cinema becomes violent and sterile. People hate a film, or they adore it, and one realises as one talks that they haven't even seen the same film. It's as though the author, here, left us the whole responsibility for sorting out the meaning of his work. He can't guide us, can't whisper just what it is he intends: he has no voice. Further than this: we all know that the same film, seen on two different occasions, may easily wear a different face each time. Circumstances play an inescapable part in forming our opinions, so that tiny details—an actor's physical appearance or the tone of his voice, our own frame of mind on going to the cinema, the way the

audience reacts, all those imponderables we are all aware of—are enough to influence the way we look at the work. There are few films, in fact, which don't act as a kind of test in projection. We reveal ourselves in the way we read them; and the more realistic the film appears, the wider the margin of interpretation left open to us.¹

It is precisely with the object of cutting down this margin (here's my second piece of evidence) that film-makers have developed that whole battery of conventions and devices which work for them like traffic signals in helping to steer the audience along. The film which demands no sort of effort from the spectator, the film which is "clear" and simple, is also the one in which reality is perpetually disappearing behind the symbols—though we're so used to these that we hardly even notice them. Someone who demands a great deal from literature is likely to go to the cinema to relax, to let it slide over him: "how childish it all is, but what fun!" But he couldn't take it like this if the film were not childish. The symbolism itself is reassuring, relaxing. At the level of the images, it invites immediate recognition, so that there's no possibility of equivocation about the role played in the story by a particular face, a gesture, an object. We know immediately who are the heroes and who the villains, who is going to win and who comes to a sticky end. The ringing of a telephone is a surprise effect which surprises no one; the creaking of a stair alerts us to danger; and the way a room is furnished tells us what is going to happen in it just as surely as the leaves ripped one by one from a calendar signal the passage of time. I'm oversimplifying, of course, but the examples are not wilfully crude. Look a little closer: you will see that in any number of films it is through such elementary symbolism, more or less subtly applied, adapted with a greater or lesser degree of skill and originality, that the meaning emerges.

At the level of the films themselves, the strict classification offers its own kind of easy symbolism. Western or thriller; light comedy; fantasy; historical epic: it's enough to look at the posters, to study the faces (and sometimes the names) of the actors to know exactly where we are, the kind of world we're entering and the kind of adventures we can expect. I don't know of any other area where the artist so shamelessly

¹ There's nothing more revealing, a psychiatrist has said to me, than the various interpretations given to *Marienbad*. They are revealing of the spectator—not of the film.



The star as symbol: reflections of Rita Hayworth in Welles' "Lady from Shanghai".

shows his hand in advance. He has to, for the mechanism to work: the spectator's peace of mind is at stake. And this may perhaps explain why a critical school of alert cinephiles, who pride themselves on having no other criteria than love of the cinema, manage to carry their devotion to *mise en scène* to such extreme lengths.² Pass beyond a certain saturation point, and all art in effect reverts to mechanism. One doesn't admire a Hitchcock or a Cottafavi for the stories they have to tell: thriller or biblical fantasy, it will all be the mixture as before. What one does admire is the dexterity which justifies the repetition. Here again, and here perhaps on a rather higher level, one could say "how childish it all is, but what fun!"

* * *

Ought one then to conclude that the cinema can't approximate to the truth without running the risk of becoming incomprehensible, and that the clarity of a film varies in inverse ratio to its artifice? That is one of the possible readings of *L'Année Dernière à Marienbad*. Alain Resnais and Alain Robbe-Grillet's film has already been the subject of innumerable interpretations; and this use of so many code-books in deciphering the same message would make no sense, had not the authors' intention been to demonstrate that the image, by itself, has no meaning. The world becomes cinema; reality becomes spectacle, and nothing but spectacle, put on show for us to accept or reject behind the glass of the screen: this is that palace of mirages where people confront but never really reach each other, beyond time and space, in the deep silence of the dream. The shoes with the broken heels, the shattered glasses, the pistol shots which never reach their targets, the double-edged words, the corridors, the mirrors, the staircases, all those reiterated signs which contradict and cancel each other out—the symbolism is here too obvious not to become suspect.

In this whole catalogue of tricks, which has had such an irritant effect for sections of the audience, I see a desire to carry representation to its extreme limits, the screen bundling together pell-mell a series of images as they occur, fluctuating and unstable. To sort them out would demand reflection: past, present, future; real or unreal; facts, longings, regrets, obsessions, hopes. *Marienbad* is not our mental world, as its authors have perhaps been a little too ready to describe it. It is that world in its silent form, and therefore pure cinema, such as no film-maker had shown it to us before. And parallel

² The writers whom Bernard Dort, in a recent article, judiciously calls the "terroristes du cinéma-cinéma"; the editors of *Cahiers du Cinéma* or *Présence du Cinéma* who confuse criticism with "liturgy".

to the images but always apart from them, capable even of rejecting them ("Non!" "Non!"), comes the voice of the narrator, equable, stubborn, the voice of reasoned passion. It is as though the dialogue were developing not within the film itself but between the film and, let's say, someone sitting in the cinema. The narrator has all the time in the world (time revolving in circles; an eternity of repetition) because he cannot not convince. And what is this narrator's voice (familiar enough to the novel reader) if not that meaning which the images have in a way expelled from the story, and which can only be restored to it through other means? *Marienbad* leaves the best part to the spectator; there are other films which, by all kinds of means, diminish it.

Although chemically pure, the cinematic situation created in *Marienbad* is also an unstable one. Nothing would be more pointless than to try to imitate it, in applying the same kind of method to other themes. Resnais and Robbe-Grillet have, as it were, denied the narrator access to the screen, almost as one might separate two adversaries before a duel. But the problem today is how to reintegrate narrative and images; or perhaps one should rather say, how genuinely to integrate them for the first time. The problem is how to recombine the elements, in the light of the experience we've acquired, how to achieve that blend of "telling" and "showing" which is the essence of narrative, and more especially that suspension of the dialogue in the images which is vital to screen narration.

In spite of all the novelist's descriptive art, the writer can never actually make us see the events he's describing; and the film should not have to tell us in words what it shows. Critics have been at fault in advancing the idea of a grammar, a cinematic syntax. All the efforts of the cineastes seem, certainly, to have been directed at establishing links, relations, contrasts, at defining images as though they were words. But the links, in the cinema, must always be implicit. Conventions may help the artist and the spectator to arrive at an identical meaning (this is what I mean by a cinema of symbols). Alternatively the spectator may attempt to follow the artist's original line of thought through the apparently insignificant details, the ambiguities, the broken line of the images; and he will not always arrive at it, or not always in the identical way, and can never be sure that he has entirely understood it. He will accept, ultimately, the responsibility of making up his own mind. (This is what I call the cinema of reality.) René Micha, in an article in a recent issue of *Arc*, wrote of the "*mouvement-signification*" by means of which we can recapture "the intention which runs through the images." I feel, however, that this is something fragile, if tenacious. There is a voice, if you like, but we can't be sure whether we are really hearing it, are really getting the sense of what it's saying. Someone is speaking, and we must try to listen; the argument is obscure—but out of this obscurity meaning emerges, through the degree of concentration demanded of us, and the questions we must ask.

This "real" cinema, then, runs counter not only to our habits of reading, but conceivably even to cinematic expression itself. Every film has something dictatorial about it; it presents itself to us as a document, a statement, and we can neither ask it to explain itself nor examine the evidence on which it's based. It is always "true". We know, however, that this truth can be the purest fiction: photographic evidence, once collected in tins of film and subjected to trick effects or fade-outs, speeded up or slowed down, can be manipulated at will. Between *cinéma-vérité* and sheer fantasy there is no clear demarcation line, but a no-man's-land where the filmgoer looks in vain for the frontier, the moment when he will know clearly and precisely on which side of the line he is. Documentaries or entertainments, stories lived and experienced or routine melodramas, they all reach us in the same way. The

"Banditi a Orgosolo": the Sardinian shepherd, suspected of banditry, ends up by accepting the role forced on him and stealing another shepherd's flock.



only authority which guarantees the image is its actual appearance on the screen, the evidence contained within itself. If the film is to take on weight and texture, to get away from the merely flat and kaleidoscopic series of impressions, to allow the spectator to enter into it as the reader enters into a book, it is essential that the *mise en scène* should also be a *mise en garde*. We must be pulled up short, taken out of our conventional way of looking at things. We need a gesture from the screen.

In all the creative anarchy of the cinema during the last few years, it seems to me that the better films have had one thing in common: they have made us aware of the *difficulty* of the cinema as a medium. The problem could be summed up like this: to renounce the easy symbols and conventions is to uncover reality—but reality stripped down merely to the appearance of things has no meaning, obeys no rules, is something at once rich in possibilities and indefinite. So one finds a whole school of modern film-making taking this uncertainty into account and providing a guarantee of validity, as far as it can, simply by asking questions. "Are you happy?" Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin naïvely inquire of their friends in *Chronique d'un Été*, a film which might have seemed less disappointing had we not been expecting so much from it. "How do you exist?" Mario Ruspoli asks the peasants of Lozère in *Les Inconnus de la Terre*. Again, in *La Fête Prisonnière*, he interrogates madmen, presumably in the hope of helping us to understand how it is that a man may go mad. And it is the question "How does a man become a bandit?" running like a thread right through the film, which gives Vittorio De Seta's admirable *Banditi a Orgosolo* its unity. *Cinéma-vérité*, however, is limited by the evidence on which it bases its questions. To rely on this brand of documentary fact (the people whose lives we observe in Paris and at Saint Tropez; the lost farmers of Lozère; the shepherds of Sardinia; the lunatics—all small groups of people whose very existence defines itself in terms of a problem) is to find rather too easy a guarantee of realism. The *real* "realistic" cinema will be the one which will be able to uncover, and to communicate, the same kind of truths and guarantees in fiction.

The thing can be done: in *L'Avventura* (the island episode), in *Hiroshima mon Amour* (the Nevers scenes), in *A Bout de Souffle* (the hotel sequence). Agnès Varda's work proves the point again. The development that can be traced through her films, from *La Pointe Courte* to *Cléo de 5 à 7*, is especially relevant in this context.

La Pointe Courte is a little like *Marienbad* in that it juxtaposes two quite distinct elements: in this case the view of a particular society and the analysis of an emotional problem. On the one hand, there are the fishermen of La Pointe Courte, with their boats and their nets, their cheerful acceptance of hardship, their world of sand and water; on the other hand, a couple who, having come here with the intention of separating, will go away reconciled. The meaning of the film (the solution of this short-lived emotional crisis) is arrived at through the confrontation between the two people and this particular setting. Philippe Noiret and Silvia Montfort (he involved, since he was born and lived here; she astonished by her discovery of an unknown world) are set down before La Pointe Courte as the audience is set down in front of the screen; and through the people and things they see there, they find a statement of their own problem. It's a model situation, but at the same time a trifle forced. We don't know much about their previous differences, and the efficacy of the cure has to be taken on trust.

The meaning is much better integrated in *Cléo*, since here the initial situation is one of expectancy, and we come to grips with it little by little through the progression of the images. The heroine is waiting for her doctor to confirm a diagnosis, fearing and also suspecting what his verdict will be. She has two hours to fill in; and we really do pass this time



Corinne Marchand in "Cléo". "... Because she's afraid, she looks at things in a different way."

with her. Agnès Varda's film never leaves its heroine. If Cléo takes a bus or a taxi, we go along with her: to a fortune teller's, to a dress shop, to her room where she rehearses a song, to a café where she plays one of her own records and no one listens, to a meeting with a friend, to the Parc Montsouris, to the hospital . . . All trifling enough happenings, which the director must show us precisely because they are trifling, because the meaning of the film is meanwhile taking shape subterraneously. What we are seeing is the world as it might appear to someone whose very existence is in a state of suspension.

One can't really say that the film speaks, in the sense in which a novelist would address us if he chose to tell this story. Rather, what Agnès Varda intends to say emerges insidiously, and inevitably, from what she shows us. Such is, such will be, the method of the *real* cinema. By contrast with the traditional cinema, its distinguishing mark will be its rejection of those signposts which tell the audience in advance what they ought to think. We are breaking away from that over-organised and tidy "cinéma de papa" (from films like Clouzot's *La Vérité*) to enter into the confusions of life as it is lived. Our first impression is going to be one of uncertainty. The world is presented to us as simple fact, left to its own devices as people are in life, and rich with the mystery which is intrinsic in people; it has the obscure fascination of a random meeting. And then gradually, as in life itself, the truth spreads out before us, through a series of readjustments. We realise that this isn't just anyone's view of the world, that this story is being told from one person's viewpoint, and that this person looks at things in a certain way, talks in a certain tone of voice. We realise in fact that there is, hidden away in the images, a continuing theme which governs the form they take. In *Cléo* this basic, underlying theme is fear: a secret, stabbing fear which changes the world in the eyes of the heroine and so changes it for the audience as well.

"Because she's afraid," Agnès Varda has written, "she looks at things in a different way; and because she looks at things differently, they begin to interest her. She becomes

(Continued on page 155)

C L FILM P S



THERE IS NOTHING LIKE a press show for making critics aware of a film and its maker. If you are actually invited to see something at a specific time, free of charge, and know that all the other critics will be there, so that however awful it is you will all be wasting your time together, of course you are more likely to attend than if it is a matter of seeking out something mysterious and unpredictable in the further reaches of the Gala-Jacey circuit or the wilds beyond Notting Hill. Still, it is sometimes a pity. Even in the upper echelons of the film world pictures get the go-by from distributors every now and again; and just because, say, *Touch of Evil* or *Le Amiche* or *Angst* or *Tigress of Bengal* does not get a press show, that hardly seems sufficient reason for them to be largely ignored by the critics.

At the moment, distributors seem particularly given to playing hide-and-seek with their films. Why, one wonders, should Fox sneak out *Madame* on release, unseen by the critics, when it stars Sophia Loren (already on show at four West End cinemas and apparently thriving on it), is directed by someone the critics have heard of, Christian-Jaque, in his best *Fanfan la Tulipe* style, and above all when the Carlton is forced for lack of product to play a succession of re-runs? Why do Paramount slip *Papa's Delicate Condition* into the Plaza without benefit of press, when it is the sort of film—slight, charming, old-fashioned and with no stars involved who mean much over here—that hasn't much of a hope unless the critics give it a boost? Why fail to show the press *Tales of Terror* and *The Day of the Triffids*? Perhaps the last two cases come in that mysterious category labelled "not a critic's film", on the good old assumption that critics don't care for pictures anyway, but only for something rare and elevated called Cinema. Oddly enough, most colour for such a view these days comes from the big-circulation popular dailies; while papers like the *Sunday Times*, *Guardian* and *The Times* are gleefully approving of old-time Hollywood know-how, the sheer un-

inhibited zest of Vadim, or the advantages of stars over actors, the 'popular' critics are as likely as not being reverential about Bergman and sniffy about Joanne Woodward.

Anyway, to get back from this lengthy excursion, it is very doubtful whether *Tales of Terror* is not, these days, a "critic's film" *par excellence*. For Roger Corman, ever since he was actually presented to the critics with *The Fall of the House of Usher* (apparently the first of his films to be press shown, at any rate in Britain), has become if not exactly a critic's darling, at any rate a critic's mascot, a film-maker who can be relied on to come up once or twice a year with a good uncritical choice. But before *Usher* Corman had directed more than twenty films (in five years!) and produced about a dozen more, mostly for Allied Artists on American International. Productions like *Hot Car Girl* or *Cry Baby Killer* hardly won a critical reputation; and as for the films he directed himself, no one seems to have seen them. In fact, of course, millions had seen them at their locals, but since they always went out as second features or in double bills for the horror circuit, nobody showed any signs of articulate interest.

Yet, as often happens, much of Corman's best work lies hidden among those low-budget programmers. Certainly *The Fall of the House of Usher* is among his best films; but for all their incidental felicities, later additions to the Poe cycle have become increasingly slack and repetitive. How much more inventive, for example, is *Gunslinger*, a small coloured Western which went the rounds with *The Wrong Man* and featured a woman sheriff (the redoubtable Beverly Garland, Corman's favourite actress in early days). Not only that, but the gimmicky idea was really used, developing into a love story between the sheriff and the gunman sent to dispose of her, at the end of which she shoots him dead and rides philosophically away. In this film too one of Corman's most invaluable qualities, the ability to tell a story swiftly and economically, was shown to excellent effect: the opening in particular, where the sheriff is shot down one quiet evening while his wife is bringing him his evening meal, and the funeral immediately following at which the widow suddenly orders the sheriff's badge to be pinned on her, start the story off at a breakneck pace which is never allowed to slacken.

Not all Corman's vast output is up to this standard. *Swamp Women*, a spirited tale of women prisoners on the run in the Everglades, where they are looking for buried loot (one of them, naturally, is a planted policewoman), was perhaps more bizarre than accomplished, though it offered three of my favourite stars, Marie Windsor, Carole Matthews and Beverly Garland, and some rather diverting sidelights on feminine psychology. Likewise *Viking Women*, *Attack of the Crab Monsters*, *Out of the Darkness* (or *Teenage Caveman*, to give it its more alluring original title) and *Rock All Night*, are primarily commendable for their oddity, though all of them were put together with considerable technical assurance and sometimes even a touch or two of real imagination. And at least two of Corman's science fiction pieces, *It Conquered the World* and *Not of this Earth*, were among the best of the cycle: sharp, economical and really frightening. Both were about alien intelligences from other planets taking over, in the first case by way of bat-like creatures which vampirised people so that they were unable to feel emotion, in the second through a solitary interloper with ray-gun eyes. Then there was *Machine Gun Kelly*, a splendidly frenetic piece about a killer with megalomaniac tendencies and a morbid fear of anything connected with death, which conjured up a rather charming image of a whole family devoted unthinkingly to criminality.

When Corman took up this sort of subject a trifle more expansively in *The Mobster*, a Fox low-budget thriller, the result was less successful, and the same is true of his black comedy style in *Tales of Terror* as compared with *Bucket of Blood*. One cannot help wondering if he is not one of those artists who, like Valéry, find the greatest freedom in the greatest restriction. Also, there are disquieting reports that he has 'gone straight', with a new-wave, serious-type drama

about colour prejudice, *The Intruder*. Still, despite the disparaging things he has been quoted as saying about his earlier works, all may yet be well; we shall just have to wait and see. Meanwhile, I wish they would bring over some of the still sizeable Corman backlog: how about *She-Gods of Shark Reef*, *The Undead* and *The Little Shop of Horrors* (reputedly made, this last, in two and a half days)? They sound like my sort of picture.

* * *

TALKING ABOUT MY SORT OF picture reminds me, I was surprised a little while ago to read an interview with Ross Hunter in *Scene* in which he was quoted as saying that he made the sort of pictures he wouldn't dream of going to see himself. On internal evidence alone, one would suspect that Hunter's films (*Magnificent Obsession*, *Pillow Talk*, *If a Man Answers*, etc.) were devised with real relish and enjoyment: they don't look like the work of a reluctant highbrow, squirming with distaste at what he's doing but doggedly persevering for the money. Still, when I met Ross Hunter I thought I might as well ask him, just for the record. Cheeringly, he was horrified: "Two or three people over here have asked me this, and I can't imagine where the story comes from. I like my own sort of film better than anyone else's; that's why I make them that way. In the evenings up at my place in Hollywood we run through just about every weepy ever made, and cry and cry and cry . . . And, of course, that way I can size up whether they have any remake potential."

Considering that so many of his own films have been remakes, I asked how he felt about them. "Well, I enjoy remakes: I find they give one a real challenge. For one thing I have been a hopeless film-fan since way back, and these great old soap operas all have a tremendous romantic aura for me, which I want to recreate in modern terms for modern audiences. I know they say that remakes are never as good as the originals, and that may be true—although not as often as the critics say, since they usually haven't seen the original in question for twenty years. If there's a good story there, though, one might as well make use of it. And that means making use of everything connected with it: the goodwill of the original title among people who saw the earlier version, and among younger people who have perhaps heard their parents talk about it or have some vague association at the back of their minds. Of course, this also limits you a bit: I wanted to get rid of that funeral and all the white horses from *Imitation of Life*, but that was the one thing everyone remembered from the original . . ."

Hunter is full of gruesome tales of front office interference—rather surprisingly, considering his money-making record. It seems you have to fight even to make straightforward commercial films the way you want to in Hollywood now. He attributes this partly to the insecurity caused by not knowing where your next audience is coming from and wanting to double and triple hedge every bet. "My principle is to decide on the audience you're aiming for—women, teenagers, family audience—and aim straight at it, casting and budgeting accordingly. That way you know where you are, and any other audience is a bonus."

For the rest, there is the traditional Hollywood mixture of extravagance where it doesn't count and penny-pinching where it does. Hunter is particularly bitter about a recent case in which he was balked of the two stars the film was designed for, and forced instead to use a female star whom both he and she thought miscast, just because the studio had to find a vehicle for her quickly or pay her off ("I say 'Pay them off: better write off a hundred thousand now than three million next year.'"), and a male star who was obviously too young and inexperienced for the role. To add insult to injury, the



"The Fall of the House of Usher": Vincent Price and Myrna Fahey among the flames.

front office would not even allow him another week's preparation to adapt the script to the new stars at a cost minute in comparison with the total budget. "Still, this sort of thing is always happening. Anyone would think I was some wild avant-garde producer who wanted to sell them *Marienbad* or something . . ."

Hunter himself is a sprightly young man, about 45 I suppose (the books don't say) but looking at least ten years younger, especially without the rather fearsome-looking glasses which he removes from time to time because "this way the décor of this suite is almost bearable" and wears, one suspects, partly to look as like a Hollywood tycoon as possible. He is in Britain at the moment to make *The Chalk Garden* (mainly, it seems, because in the States Hayley Mills belongs exclusively to Uncle Walt; otherwise Hunter believes in sticking close to base). But any suspicions that he might be going highbrow are soon allayed. His last was a remake of *The Dark Angel* ("You know I paid Sam Goldwyn \$100,000 for the rights to that, and



Ross Hunter (standing) and Deborah Kerr framed by set designs for "The Chalk Garden".

in the end we used only the last ten minutes of the original") and coming up next is *Madame X*. How about *Stella Dallas*? "No. Goldwyn is very eager that I should buy it, but I just don't think it can be done in 1963 terms . . ." Still, he has a reflective look in his eye.

ONE THING THAT I HAVE BEEN noticing increasingly of late, and on which it seems impossible to get any comment at all—except that it doesn't exist—is the increasing amount of advertising within the body of fiction films. The advantages of the arrangement are obvious for the manufacturers. It all comes back to the old P.R. adage: whenever possible get editorial mention, since an inch in an editorial column is worth a page of advertising which everyone knows you have paid for. If we see an advertisement in the interval while we are scrambling for ice-creams and drinks, or even those pound boxes of chocolates and bags of boiled sweets which seem nowadays to be the smallest foyer stalls can offer, we take it with a pinch of salt. But if we are warming to the glamorous image of some starlet or other in her all-technicolor kitchen (well, I admit it sounds unlikely, but there you are), then it is, in theory at least, likely that we shall thrill equally to her glamorous packet of detergent which somehow, wherever the camera happens to be, always manages to be presented to us full-face, bright and clear.

As a matter of fact, it is these little instances which are the most mystifying. Presumably in order to get Doris Day in *Midnight Lace* to assure us that she uses Daimler Hire, Daimlers put a few cars at the company's disposal; and for all the advertising they got in *Call Me Bwana*, no doubt Lufthansa let them film scenes in and around their airliners and so on. As for the prominent advertising for Top Rank bowling in *The Wild and the Willing*, it takes no great subtlety to ferret out the reason for that. But how does it happen that one detergent gets prominently shown in a kitchen otherwise devoid of recognisable branded goods? Free wardrobe care, perhaps? But surely not. A small private transaction? Possibly, but one would love to know how much it is worth: a few free lunches? an introduction or two? not, perish the thought, cash-type money? I suppose it's just one of those little mysteries destined to remain, as far as the general public is concerned, unfathomably mysterious.

ARKADIN



FILM REVIEWS

SALVATORE GIULIANO

FOLK HEROES TRADITIONALLY belong to heroic periods of history, or at any rate to a context in which, whatever the rights and wrongs of the situation, their actions at least make sense. And by the time they come to be celebrated in legend this period is often past. They belong to a mythical, not a political world, and have a mythical, not a political significance. This is not true of Salvatore Giuliano, the modern folk hero of the Italian south. He is not El Cid, nor Cesare Borgia, nor even Jesse James. Too much is known about him and the world in which he operated, and this world is too much with us. He is a figure of the political present; an anachronistic figure, perhaps, but still a controversial one. Danilo Dolci goes on hunger strike; a trade union leader is found shot in the back in a crowded street. The Mafia, under whose shadow Giuliano flourished, does not change. He cannot yet be consigned, gladly or reluctantly as the case may be, to the limbo of myth.

Francesco Rosi's *Salvatore Giuliano* (Gala) is an overtly political film. It is not just political by implication, as would be any romantic fiction about Giuliano which failed to question the legend and thus seemed, tacitly and by default, to approve both the legend and its political consequences. Nor is it semi-political, a cops-and-robbers story, replete with domestic and sexual tragedy, which evokes as if by chance a particular political environment and offers a pious formal condemnation of the bandit with a heart of gold. In matter of form, *Salvatore Giuliano* is closer to reconstructed and dramatised documentary than to a conventional fiction film. In content it is devoted unsparingly to unmasking a particular legend and to denouncing the situation that made the legend possible. Giuliano himself, in this perspective, is relatively insignificant. Far more important are the economic and social conditions which produced him, and the political machinations that have contributed to perpetuate these conditions—and, as a curious by-product, the legend itself. It is one of those rare cases where the way a subject is treated seems directly dictated by the logic of the situation; and, given Rosi's uncompromising commitment both to left-wing political ideals and to the ideal of a non-romantic cinema, it is not surprising that this should be the kind of film he set out to make.

What is perhaps surprising is that he should have succeeded so well, that he should have made a film which not only fulfils his immediate intention but is impeccably stylish throughout. A compromise would have been so easy—and so disastrous—between the demands of narrative, political honesty and (God help us!) plastic values. *Salvatore Giuliano*, given its intentions, could easily have been dull, ugly and emotionally mute. Given the need to sustain public interest, it could as easily have degenerated into a sort of Sicilian Western, lingering over landscapes and tracing in elemental form a simple clash of personalities and values. Fortunately, however, Rosi has not only the courage of his convictions but also a formidable technique (and Gianni di Venanzo to take care of the photography for him). Above all he is extraordinarily aware (much more so than, for example, Visconti) of the implications that a particular camera set-up or effect of montage will have not merely on the film's general emotional impact but, more particularly, on its logical status as a document. And since this is an extremely complex film which aims to comprehend several different points of view, different attitudes to the same event and different versions of what the event actually was, this is more than usually important.

It is not known, for example, exactly how Giuliano was finally killed. The story put out at the time was that he had been shot, in self-defence, by the police. Later it appeared that he was in fact murdered by one of his lieutenants, as a result of some shady

"*Salvatore Giuliano*": Pisciotto (Frank Wolff), Giuliano's lieutenant and assassin, leaves the house after the murder.

dealings with the authorities and the Mafia. But what the exact arrangements were, and under what conditions and to what advantage the lieutenant agreed to shoot his chief, is still unclear. The various levels of fact, appearance and speculation in all this must be scrupulously kept distinct; and so they are. The initial high-angle shot of Giuliano's body lying in the courtyard gives nothing away that was not known at the time. To all appearances the police story is the correct one. But the camera refuses, by its overall detachment from the scene, to identify itself with either the police version or the suspicions of the journalists. In the same way the merging of a series of flashbacks over Giuliano's career as a bandit with the record of the trial, after his death, of surviving members of the gang, is conducted in such a way as never to pre-judge an uncertain issue. The point of view of a shepherd boy coerced into joining the gang is presented sympathetically, in a brief vignette; but nothing in this vignette, subjective though it is, goes beyond the evidence. Its value is not impugned by the suspicion that in describing his experience at the trial the boy may well not have been telling the exact truth.

The question of emotional participation and critical judgment is a more delicate one. Some critics have accused Rosi of making a cold film, so detached as to deny the spectator access to the thoughts and feelings of the characters. This charge is irrelevant and unfair. *Salvatore Giuliano* is a violent film, emotionally as well as physically; but its violence makes no direct impact, at any rate on an English spectator. This is partly for the bad contingent reason—witness the critical reception of *Rocco* here—that most Anglo-Saxon people find Mediterranean histrionics and hysterics hard to accept at face value as genuine expressions of emotion; and partly for the much better reason that the conception of the film as an overall picture, a fresco rather than a portrait, absolutely requires some degree of detachment. Emotion on the part of the characters, and sympathy in the director's approach, yes; but emotional sympathy pumped out of the audience, absolutely no. In this respect at least *Salvatore Giuliano* is resolutely Brechtian, and an epic rather than a tragic film. There is enough material in the story for a dozen tragic tales—Giuliano's own included—but none of these could have been explored without distracting attention from the general design.

This is not to say that single events are deprived of pathos: on the contrary, they acquire it from their context. When obscure communists are massacred at a May Day meeting, or soldiers shot from behind in a town terrorised equally by the bandits and the military, it is their very anonymity that makes their deaths moving, and their position as victims in a struggle of impersonal forces. This is particularly pointed, and poignant, in the scene in which Giuliano's mother is shown kneeling over her son's dead body in an attitude of hieratic grief like that of the virgin in a medieval *Pietà*. As the journalists crowd round someone sanctimoniously cries out, "Stop! Respect a mother's grief." But no one does, and she is past caring whether they do or not. She is utterly absorbed in her own suffering. The camera registers the public aspect of her grief, the *pietà*, but does not intrude on her private world.

If there is tragedy in any of this, it is collective tragedy, tragedy in which the chorus takes the role of the hero, and the nominal protagonists (as in the case of the mother) take on the chorus' role. Giuliano certainly is not the hero, for Rosi's film is a Hamlet without the prince. No character emerges from the few shots of a fleeting being in a white raincoat which is all we see of him in life, nor from those shots, more insistent, of his bullet-ridden corpse. To this extent therefore he remains a legend. But it is a legend deprived once and for all of charismatic power. As a hero, Rosi makes clear, he was miscast; as a political leader, which he claimed to be, he was a fraud. But as a man? Was he really as insignificant as Rosi, in this instance and for once disingenuously, makes him out to have been?

GEOFFREY NOWELL-SMITH.

THE DAMNED

INASMUCH AS HE IS always willing to take on a poor script and try to make the most of it, Joseph Losey can be fairly described as a sport. But even his talent has been overstrained by *The Damned* (BLC/Columbia). Based on a conventional piece of thriller science fiction, cut by its proprietors and eventually sneaked into the West End without a press preview, *The Damned* by all rights should have been a disaster; one can only admire, then, its narrowness of escape.

Its theme—so far as one can decipher it—is sketched out in the



"The Damned": Viveca Lindfors and Oliver Reed.

dialogue between two of its most intriguing characters: Bernard, the scientist-bureaucrat, and Freya, his mistress. "The age of senseless violence has caught up with us, too," Bernard says, glaring down at the bland promenades of Weymouth; and later, at the climax, he cries out, "After the first explosion, strange, wonderful flowers bloomed in the desert . . ." Disorder, in effect, leads to mutation, and such mutations flourish in England now.

This is a commonplace theme which, like most good themes, still retains its power; and Losey in part manages to exploit this. Appropriately enough, Freya makes charred, twisted bird-men sculptures which obviously go against the humanist grain, while Bernard is responsible for an experiment in which radioactive ice-cold children are locked up in an underground hell, presumably furnished by Heal's. But Losey—and it may not be entirely his fault—fails to make very much of these ideas. Freya, Bernard, and indeed all the characters, never come to anything; they whirl like fractured atoms in a void, and with such aggressiveness that one wonders whether *The Damned* is also meant to be a mutation produced by disorder. One fragment of the story tells of Simon (a dreary stodge, played by Macdonald Carey with touching fidelity) in love with a minx named Joan. In another fragment Joan is somehow involved—incestuously?—with her hoodlum brother King, leader of a gang of ton-up kids who make a living by beating up Weymouth tourists. By a series of wild accidents, Simon, Joan and King are trapped with the children, and so contaminated. Unanswered questions litter their route; questions which show themselves to be, in the light of the final sequence, more failures in plot construction and brutal editing than attempts to probe the mysteries of existence. In spite of Losey's insistence, *The Damned* is no metaphysical drama: it rightly bears the Hammer trademark.

In spite of Losey's insistence . . . We have here the case of a vivid talent, ill-reined by a poor script, and breaking out in all directions so that from among the fragments a scene will suddenly glitter with life. Most of the scenes with the sculptress (Viveca Lindfors—a beautiful performance) are of this dazzling type: one remembers gratefully her midnight encounter with King, her pastoral-elegiac conversation with Sid (Kenneth Cope). Yet in the total context what do these moments mean? *The Damned* convinces me that the serious artist should seldom try to "improve" a shoddy idea; at the most he is honour-bound to make a craftsman's job of it, to keep the narrative line clean and hard and to smooth out the rough edges. The maker of silk purses, as the old adage has it, is well warned to skirt the ear of the sow.

But Losey has a reputation. He has, alas, his fans. And he is

always tempted, therefore, to nudge and wink at his audience as though he had a secret to disclose. In this case there is no secret; but the nudging and winking are there all the same. I cannot help thinking that in *The Damned* the attempts at "personal statement" are all too often forms of self-indulgence. So Losey loads every rift with aimless symbolism—why are there all those references to royalty, in the children's names, in the shots of the Weymouth statuary—and tries to conceal the sheer awfulness of much of the acting by turning his performers into menacing automatons.

Naturally the fans have fallen for this. Some of them have gone so far as to compare *The Damned* with *Paris Nous Appartient*. Certainly both films have fantastic plots and prey upon our sense of anxiety. But this is as far as the comparison goes. *Paris Nous Appartient* uses its fantastic plot to illuminate the quotidian: its locations *smell* of Paris, they have an atmosphere and a geography. This *The Damned* fails to achieve. Apart from the sculptress, its characters are stereotypes. Its relationships—between Bernard and Freya, Simon and Joan—are implausible. The children, inevitably, are refined, precise in speech and well scrubbed, like the children in *Village of the Damned*. (Do film-makers have to believe that the sole representatives of the "living damned" are members of the upper middle class?) Despite its elegant camerawork, its well chosen locations and well designed sets, *The Damned* never creates an atmosphere. At the most it leaves us with a few vivid scenes and a few memorable images: the ton-up kids in black leather (shades of *Orphée*!) cruising past a pool of yachts; the bird-men glowering over a sleepy ocean.

The trouble is that Losey, unlike Rivette, never allows us to dwell on incidents, to appreciate the texture and qualities of the world; and by this failure alone, he fatally reveals his lack of conviction in the script, and his failure to make any emotional connection between its fantasy and daily life. Losey's nose, as it were, is continually pressed too close to the mirror of his narrative, so that every detail, every bit of trivia, is without perspectives. *The Damned* is no *Paris Nous Appartient*. If you want an analogy, you could say somewhat cruelly that it is like *The Manchurian Candidate*, but without the wit or humour.

ERIC RHODE

HUD

EVIDENTLY MARTIN RITT is no longer the puzzle he once seemed. Originally a stage and television actor-director, he made a notable first film in *A Man is Ten Feet Tall*, then gradually came to share a reputation with his TV-trained contemporary, John Frankenheimer, as a flash in the pan. Well, stars were never the only people who wilted for lack of good scripts. While Frankenheimer sweated it out for the most part on the small screen, waiting for *The Manchurian Candidate* to boost his reputation, Ritt dodged uneasily between the streamlined methods of Hollywood and Europe, trying to make sets look like locations and melodrama like resolution. However his latest film, like Frankenheimer's, is uncommonly well-written, with the result that Ritt has successfully marshalled his several virtues—response to place and atmosphere, technical skill, a spirit of enquiry into a changing way of life, a flair for actors—and banished his old uncertainties.

Hud (Paramount), shot in Texas, from a novel by Larry McMurty, absorbs with curbed fascination its lonely, leisurely background. And not just background—heat and dust, plain and uncurving asphalt ribbon, cattle-ranch porch and kitchen. Freshly though James Wong Howe's black-and-white Panavision photography catches the Old West, it is the often brutal incongruity behind this façade which gives the film its force; the cowboy's Cadillac trampling down the zinnia-patch, the boy's transistor radio competing with the grasshoppers, the rubber-clad army in the wake of today's scientific vet. There is conflict here, between generations, between conventions, and the characters embody it.

Hud, the rancher's son (Paul Newman), is lean and ruggedly individualistic. But there the convention ends. His independence is in fact an aggressive rejection of other people, whether the nephew (Brandon DeWilde) whose growing pains bore him or the housekeeper (Patricia Neal) whom he drunkenly attempts to rape. Instead of bronco-busting he goes in for a (doubtless) metaphorical bout of pig-wrestling; his appetites are reserved for married women,

his fists for brawlers whose hands are pinned down, his ambition for levering his father out of the driver's seat.

Just as the gravel-toned stoicism of Melvyn Douglas's Homer hints candidly at an excess of probity, necessary to help explain his son's bitterness, so Hud's casual opportunism is given both psychological root and ultimate tragic stature. Guilt-ridden over the death of his brother, Hud gives nothing to others because he cannot give forgiveness to himself; and when, deserted and unrepentant, he slams the door on himself in the powerfully understated last shot, the aridity of the cattle-less landscape mirrors his own barren future. This is one of Hollywood's rare, successful stabs at tragedy, a sort of male Regina Giddens fade-out on a saga of wrong-headedness and self-destruction.

For once Hollywood's favoured schematism of character and story manages to work, to become indispensable, symbols and all. Psychological density and structural design knit together, never rigged, never forced. Even the familiar uncle-nephew relationship, its casting of Brandon DeWilde invoking direct comparison with his similar, brother-fixated role in Frankenheimer's *All Fall Down*, is done with quiet sympathy. Actually this is due in large part to Patricia Neal's implicitly maternal sexuality in her scenes with the boy. Elsewhere this remarkable actress brings a laconic wit, an unsentimental despair and a barbed sexuality to her role which give the rest of the film a key, a consistency of tone. But she needed the lines, and these Irving Ravetch and Harriet Frank Jr. have provided on a level of sophistication totally unexpected from their scripts for two of Ritt's least successful, Faulkner-inspired films.

Though *Hud*, like its hero, has a wry and deceptive charm (witness the sing-song in the cinema with the words of *Clementine*, hyphenated to the last syllable, projected on the screen), its main preoccupation is with death. Death colours Hud's philosophy: "the only helping hand you'll get is the one that lowers you into your grave." And during the funeral, a well-meaning assurance that Homer has gone to a better place is rejected with dry-eyed certainty: "Not unless dirt is a better place than air." Both lines sum up the terse and elemental polarity of the film. The earth is livelihood, freedom and death to Homer; an implacably hostile prison to Hud; a place for relationships, like plants, that never thrive to the housekeeper; a forcing-house to the boy.

Possibly the development falters in the last third, but never enough to distract one from the film's spare narrative line. From the ominous discovery of the first dead heifer, to the massacre of the



Paul Newman and Patricia Neal in "Hud".

diseased herd, to Homer's own end and Hud's empty inheritance of a land he passively stood by and watched die, the story methodically unwinds like a python lying sated in the sun. Destruction—of hope, of life, of legend—is not a congenial subject. It is to Ritt's credit not only that he has tackled it at all, but that he has done so penetratingly and with lyrical intensity, achieving catharsis in the process.

PETER JOHN DYER

FREAKS

FILMS SUNG BUT MORE or less unseen for decades as often as not turn out to be a disappointment, but Tod Browning's *Freaks* (Antony Balch Films)—made in 1932, never released in this country, and celebrated as the Grand Guignol to end all Grand Guignols in its use of real freaks in a horror setting—actually enriches its prefabricated image. If the last scenes are horrific enough to satisfy most ghoulish tastes, the revelation of the film is its warmth and humanity. Browning manages to evoke the closed world of freaks, the intensely human emotions contained in inhuman exteriors, in such a way that fascinated revulsion turns into tender comprehension. His first introduction of the freaks—not the pretty little midgets, who are easy enough to accept, but the mutilated fragments and cruel distortions—is characteristic. As a local squire walks through a forest, his gamekeeper babbles wildly about having seen grotesque creatures in the wood, and the camera focuses on a clearing in which *things* crawl, dance and hop obscenely. The squire angrily protests, and Madame Petralini, the motherly body in charge of the freaks, explains that they are merely playing in the sun on a day off from the circus. An instinctive huddling of the terrified freaks against Madame Petralini, a gesture from a pin-headed woman who lovingly touches her face, and the scene suddenly turns from a Walpurgisnacht revel into a charming idyll.

The story itself, apart from the fact that pin-headed women, living torso, half-man, frog-man, armless women dwarfs, are all played by real freaks, is fairly conventional horror stuff. Two circus midgets, Hans and Frieda, are engaged to be married, but Hans is attracted to Cleopatra, the beautiful, normal-sized trapeze artiste. As a joke, Cleopatra encourages him. Then, discovering that he is rich, she inveigles him into marriage, planning to poison him with the help of her strong-man lover, Hercules. At the wedding banquet, the assembled freaks conduct a ritual ceremony, accepting Cleopatra as one of their clan, but she recoils in disgust. Their suspicions aroused, the freaks band together, rescue Hans, hunt Cleopatra and Hercules down, and exact revenge by horribly mutilating the guilty pair.

The brilliance of the film lies in the care with which the context of this story is evoked. On the one hand, the "normal" circus folk, their cruel, unthinking mockery of the freaks; on the other, the freaks themselves, joyous, eager to accept anybody who will meet them halfway. Frozo the clown and his girl Venus, who take the freaks as they are, link these worlds in two wholly charming scenes: teasing Slitzky, one of the pin-headed women, about her new dress, and joking with the bearded lady about the birth of her baby. These scenes, and more particularly the sequence of the wedding banquet, provide an emotional basis for the horror of the climax.

The wedding banquet is a brilliant piece of *mise en scène*, with all the freaks assembled round a long table in joyous and raucous celebration of the marriage, culminating in the wild progress of a dwarf down the centre of the table, clutching a loving-cup of wine, and accompanied by a mounting chant of "We Accept Her, We Accept Her, One of Us . . .". The intensity, the idiot laughter, the terrifying ritual of the chant, make Cleopatra's revulsion perfectly natural. But at the same time, she is still unable to consider the freaks as other than unfeeling monsters, and inflicts the final insult on her tiny husband by carrying him piggy-back round the room in front of all his friends. After this, and the subsequent slow poisoning of Hans, there is no doubt whose side one is on.

The macabre finale, lit in chiaroscuro, is again beautifully done. As Hercules and Cleopatra go about their business of poisoning Hans, eyes watch constantly, peering in at windows, from beneath caravans. The freaks gather their forces; the storm breaks, the rain comes pouring down, knives appear; nothing on the sound-track but the storm, the caravans rolling, a melancholy tune played by a dwarf on a pipe; the streaming rain, the thick mud full of crawling shapes in the darkness, and Cleopatra and Hercules running screaming in terror.

Except for key scenes, like the banquet and the final hunt, the



"Freaks": Hans (Harry Earles), Cleopatra (Olga Baclanova) and Hercules (Henry Victor) in the wedding banquet sequence.

film is fairly rough and ready, and the acting of the "normal" characters (Wallace Ford as Frozo, Leila Hyams as Venus, Olga Baclanova as Cleopatra) is not much better. Paradoxically, though, this seems to work in the film's favour. Against the stiltedness, the freaks come over even more strongly. The real world is that of the freaks: of Johnny, perfect from the waist up but cut off below, who can enjoy and try to improve on Frozo's clowning; of the living torso, who lights his own cigarette, and calmly meditates on what is going on around him; of the frog-man, married to the bearded lady, proudly offering cigars to celebrate the birth of his baby; of Slitzky, who can conduct a flirtation as well as anybody; and above all, of the formal, gentle Hans and Frieda, with their grave concern for each other's welfare. And we, the audience, have been accepted; we are "one of them".

TOM MILNE

TOUT L'OR DU MONDE

EVEN IN HIS DAYS as an innovator René Clair was firmly rooted in cinema tradition. It should come as no surprise therefore to find him making a thoroughly traditional French bucolic comedy. What is rather unexpected about *Tout l'Or du Monde* (Connoisseur) is that its lineage appears to be from *Joffroi* through *Clochemerle* and the Tati films rather than through his own early work. It is positively earthy and almost totally lacking in the characteristic Clair element of fantasy. Nevertheless the theme and the gentle satire with which it is treated both have their relation to the earlier Clair, and he has retained all his ability to work up a series of gags on the slenderest of threads.

The story of a pig-headed peasant and his shepherd son, who refuse to sell their land with its health-giving spring to a money-grubbing real-estate speculator, had apparently been in Clair's mind for many years. Introducing it in the preface to the published script, he says that it was based on an actual incident in France. He goes on to say: "*Qui avait tort? Qui avait raison? Ceux qui voyaient grand, qui voulaient bâtir et qui, peut-être, allaient assurer la prospérité du canton? Ou celui que l'argent ne tentait pas et qui n'avait d'autre ambition que de passer sa vie auprès de son puits et de ses pommiers?*"

Je n'en sais rien . . . Et je ne pense pas qu'une morale doive obligatoirement découler de tous les contes." In the light of the finished work this is a somewhat disingenuous statement, for the film itself comes down firmly on the side of the simple life. Audience sympathy is enlisted unmistakably for "Toine, the shy shepherd who is content to "spend his life among his apple trees," and the speculator is characterised or caricatured as a greedy heartless villain. Lest there should be any doubt, the film ends on a shot of the vital spring accompanied by a repetition of "Toine's own words, "the spring is by the roadside and everyone can use it." If this does not point to a moral what is it for?

But no one is really in any doubt where Clair stands in these matters. Like Renoir (*Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*) and Tati (*Mon Oncle*), he is adding his vote for the old comfortable unhygienic past and against the brave new automatic age. It is a natural attitude for a man of his generation and it is expressed in this film with humour and charm. The opening scenes in a Paris traffic jam have many echoes, some of them from *Mon Oncle* and also Etais's delightful *Heureux Anniversaire*, but the technique is so crisp that the slight variations on a theme still seem fresh and funny. This same crispness does in fact become a little tiresome when the use of very fast panning shots in place of cuts begins to trouble the eye. This device also has the air of being used to speed up the pace—a pity since the film has a leisurely tempo of its own and needs no artificial accelerator. Indeed Clair demonstrates his mastery of a witty visual shorthand time and time again. We see old Dumont hacking away at a hated hoarding on his land, we see the hoarding falling towards him—cut to a shot of the village belfry and the old man's demise is established. It is this kind of stylistic economy which gives the film a personal touch and a sharpness which is lacking in the screenplay. Without it, and without the warm personality of Bourvil playing both "Toine and his irascible father, the satire could have been too slack to stretch over ninety minutes. As it is the chuckles flow continuously, and if the targets are wide they are hit with a satisfying regularity.

BRENDA DAVIES

In Brief

WINTER LIGHT (*Gala*). With each film Ingmar Bergman pares down the substance further: music, emotional variety, the comic—or rather the intentionally comic—are eliminated; the once fluent camerawork grinds down to a halt. And steadily, as the austerity grows more uncompromising, the themes climb higher. Surely, we imagine, this is the grand progress of a master, of another Bresson? But if Bergman at first sight gives the impression of a man going somewhere, a more sustained look suggests that if he moves at all, he is moving in circles; or so it would appear from *Winter Light*, the latest of his films to reach London and the second in the trilogy begun with *Through a Glass Darkly*. Like the film's pastor hero, who wants "to break out of this maze of triviality," Bergman is trapped by his own limitations. For the truth is that Bergman's talent needs the trivial. A superficial director in the best sense of the word, he has a superb feeling for surfaces: for sophisticated folly, for mirrors and moods, for milky light playing on water. The viewer is dazzled by this gloss, and in films such as *Smiles of a Summer Night* is blinded to Bergman's lack of insight, his failure to explore character or situation. Banish the elaborations, and a void is disclosed.

In *Winter Light* Bergman stakes his entire hand on the delineation of a theme: the death of faith. Less than a dozen communicants come to Pastor Ericsson's church, and many of them, when tested, prove unfaithful. This is an engaging theme, yet Bergman has been unable to work it out in terms of his characters, who remain so remote and stiff that we can't believe in their suffering. Ingrid Thulin, for instance, makes a game shot at the part of a myopic, moping schoolmistress, ravaged by eczema, and in love with the pastor; but her part is written with such a failure of tact that the wretched creature comes over as ridiculous. Even more worrying is the case of the pastor himself, for it is on his situation that the weight of the argument rests. The pas or fails to save a fisherman from suicide and believes himself deserted by God: the world becomes absurd. What are we to understand by this? Gunnar Björnstrand, at his most grave, nobly tries to present this man's anxiety; but his gestures remain those of melodrama, since one feels there is no content behind them. Bergman has little to say about this crisis of faith: the *noche obscura* is used merely as a theatrical trick. Nor is the connection between the pastor's crisis

and his cruelty to the schoolmistress made explicit, although it is obvious, from the emphasis placed on their scenes together, that some sort of connection is intended. There is no felt life in the treatment, and at the end we have learned nothing about the pastor that we didn't guess in the first ten minutes.

Does Bergman want to convince us that extreme doubt is a sign of faith; or is such sophistry typical only of a suffragan bishop? Perhaps he is merely giving us a picture of mute provincial misery? I don't know—and I can't much care. Bergman lacks the conviction of a Bresson. Continually one senses the ringmaster lurking behind the theologian, and there is something distasteful about the sawdust-and-tinsel theology which results.

ERIC RHODE

WOMAN OF SUMMER (*Fox*) has the credentials of a typical prestige production from the late Jerry Wald. Based on the play *A Loss of Roses* by William Inge (at his observant best with *Come Back Little Sheba*) and hysterical worst with the screenplay for *Splendour in the Grass*), it has the familiar small-town, hot summer setting and the familiar technical gloss. The story is that of an unsuccessful actress, Lila (Joanne Woodward), who surrenders to the infatuation of a teenage boy (Richard Beymer) only to find that he no longer wants her. There are formulaary parts all round: Claire Trevor's possessive mother, Helen, Carol Lynley's prim girlfriend, Robert Webber's unscrupulous seducer. Meade Roberts' screenplay, with its stagy dialogue and near-absence of any outside world, shows no particular sense of cinema, and Jerry Goldsmith's score relentlessly plugs the clichés. Yet despite all this, the film is consistently interesting to look at, and even reveals something of a heart.

Joanne Woodward's piquant performance, aptly complemented by Ellsworth Fredricks' strikingly sharp photography, is what primarily attracts and holds the attention. But the many low-angled studies in white—Miss Woodward with her white clothes and platinum hair against the predominantly white and sunlit settings of the contemporary housing estate—also intimate that the director Franklin Schaffner, a newcomer from television, is speaking a language that he understands. If his comment on the essential fragility of Lila's kind of beauty is simply to fill the screen with the creamy texture of rose blossom, he can also suggest quite subtle interactions between people by the way he uses the space around and between his actors—who, incidentally, all give the best performances at their command. Helen's house, with its gauze curtains and staircase from the living room, plays an important part in the scenes between Lila and the boy; and when Lila tells Helen about her humiliating past the scene works not just because the camera takes it so much more calmly than the script, but also because it is the logical confrontation between the conventional and the unconventional implicit in almost every shot of the two women, and more bluntly stated in the circumstances of their meeting at the theatre where Lila was part of a cheap illusionist act. The impression one forms (perhaps wrongly) that Schaffner has more to say about the characters than Inge, undoubtedly stems from the fact that this obviously talented director was trying to make a film rather than film a play. The dichotomy between his aims and those of his script perhaps accounts for interesting loose ends, like the snappy pre-credits scene on Sunset Strip, as well as unnecessary amplifications such as Lila's recollections of her first day at school, and the violent way in which her ex-lover tries to coerce her into becoming a stripper. The director, one feels, deserved a more trenchantly selective screenplay, and it is to his credit that such a fluent film emerged.

ELIZABETH SUSSEX

THE LIST OF ADRIAN MESSENGER (*Rank*) celebrates the return of a status symbol. Not for years have we seen the English detective in all his ancestral glory, with the full paraphernalia of manservant, silver coffee pot, bowler (to be retained on the head while kicking in doors), and authority to order Scotland Yard about without in any way imperilling his own amateur status. On the trail of a mass murderer as old-fashioned as himself, with a mad passion for disguise and a snatch of identifying theme tune, the detective goes about things in the old leisurely way, always a jump or two ahead of the police and a jump or two behind the audience. Add a climax on the hunting field, a murder set in Hollywood Limehouse, plenty of fog, a fox-hunting peer (Clive Brook) who studiously drops every "g" in range, and a broken-accented French Watson, and the scene appears very satisfactorily set.

The problem, however, is one of level: how much, and how openly, to spoof. The script of *Beat the Devil* gave John Huston opportunities to develop his own mixed feelings about English snobbery and English seediness; and by contrast *The List of Adrian*

Messenger leaves one in doubt as to whether its writer, Anthony Veiller, has taken over a thriller cliché knowingly, with the director's full complicity, or has fallen into it because nothing better suggested itself. One little scene, featuring Gladys Cooper, her mincing husband (Dalio) and an autocratic poodle, is touched with glittering malice. A barbed line of dialogue; an incisive framing of two profiles, canine and human; a discreet withdrawal: here the characterisation has all the precision which elsewhere fades into the English fog. For the rest, there are a couple of quick, ferocious killings (the pre-credit sequence, involving some fast work with a lift, and the Limehouse murder), and a good deal of slack in the script which hasn't been tightened up in the direction. Everyone, more or less, is in disguise, from George C. Scott, whose playing of the detective combines impeccable regard for protocol with glinting amusement, to the few million pounds' worth of Hollywood star talent concealed beneath masks and ringlets in a series of minor roles. The director's own mask is cold, cruel, a little bored: the masquerading actors and the make-up man seem to have got rather more out of the joke.

PENELOPE HOUSTON

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD (Universal-International/Rank) is one of those films which seem to have been devised as an Oscar-trap, with a bait of high-toned liberal sentiment to lure the voters in. As such it served its purpose, and now we might as well forget that side of it altogether, since fortunately for half-an-hour of solemn courtroom drama (noble, high-principled white lawyer defends noble, high-principled negro workman against some shifty poor whites' accusations of rape and the accumulated prejudice of a Southern township) there is an hour and a half devoted to some of the most brilliantly directed and unsentimentally observed children the American cinema has brought us in a long, long time.

Perhaps we should not be surprised that the film is, for three-quarters of its length, so good; after all Robert Mulligan did make one of the most exciting debuts in an exciting generation with *Fear Strikes Out*. But that was six years ago, and he has made some pretty rubbishy films for other producers since (this time he is back with the same producer, Alan Pakula, which may be significant). Perhaps he has just never in the meantime been given the right sort of subject for his talents, which clearly have a decidedly gothic turn. When dealing with dream, fantasy and neurosis he can be superb; when tied to everyday mundanities he is merely competent (in this film compare the treatment of the trial with the rest; they might have been directed by different people).

To Kill a Mockingbird is, first and foremost, a re-creation of a children's world, and a rather grizzly, ghoulish world at that, where the main centre of local interest is a lunatic reputed to be dangerous, where dogs just run mad in the streets every now and again, and where the half-noticed adult dramas which go on around only occasionally impinge, violently and all the more frightening for being totally unpredictable. Even if the relations of the two principal children (Mary Badham and Phillip Alford) with their father (Gregory Peck) are, like the character of the father himself, rather too good to be true, the long stretches of the film where the children are left to themselves achieve a particular sort of truth about childhood which has rarely been hinted at on the screen since the Hallowe'en sequence of *Meet Me in St. Louis*. The result may not be as 'important' as the liberal message, but it is far more genuine.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

DONOVAN'S REEF (Paramount). A meeting of two old shipmates in a broken-down bar on a South Pacific island is followed by a gentle pretence at handshakes before the business of bashing each other begins; and *Donovan's Reef* is off in the way it intends to go on. Perhaps one could call the film John Ford's *Hatari!*, for certainly its rambling narrative and air of cheerful improvisation invite the comparison. Then, as it momentarily slows down after a prelude of flying fists, welcoming hula-hula girls and some rough stuff with a broken-down jukebox, other memories begin to crowd in. Is it, perhaps, a more exotic *Quiet Man*, with John Wayne involved this time with a prim Bostonian seeking her father who has gone native in the islands? But latter-day Ford has difficulty in recapturing that picture's fine strand of charm, although he remembers (and repeats) most of the fisticuffs and tames his shrew by subjecting her to all manner of duckings and bone-shaking jeep rides. A new girl,



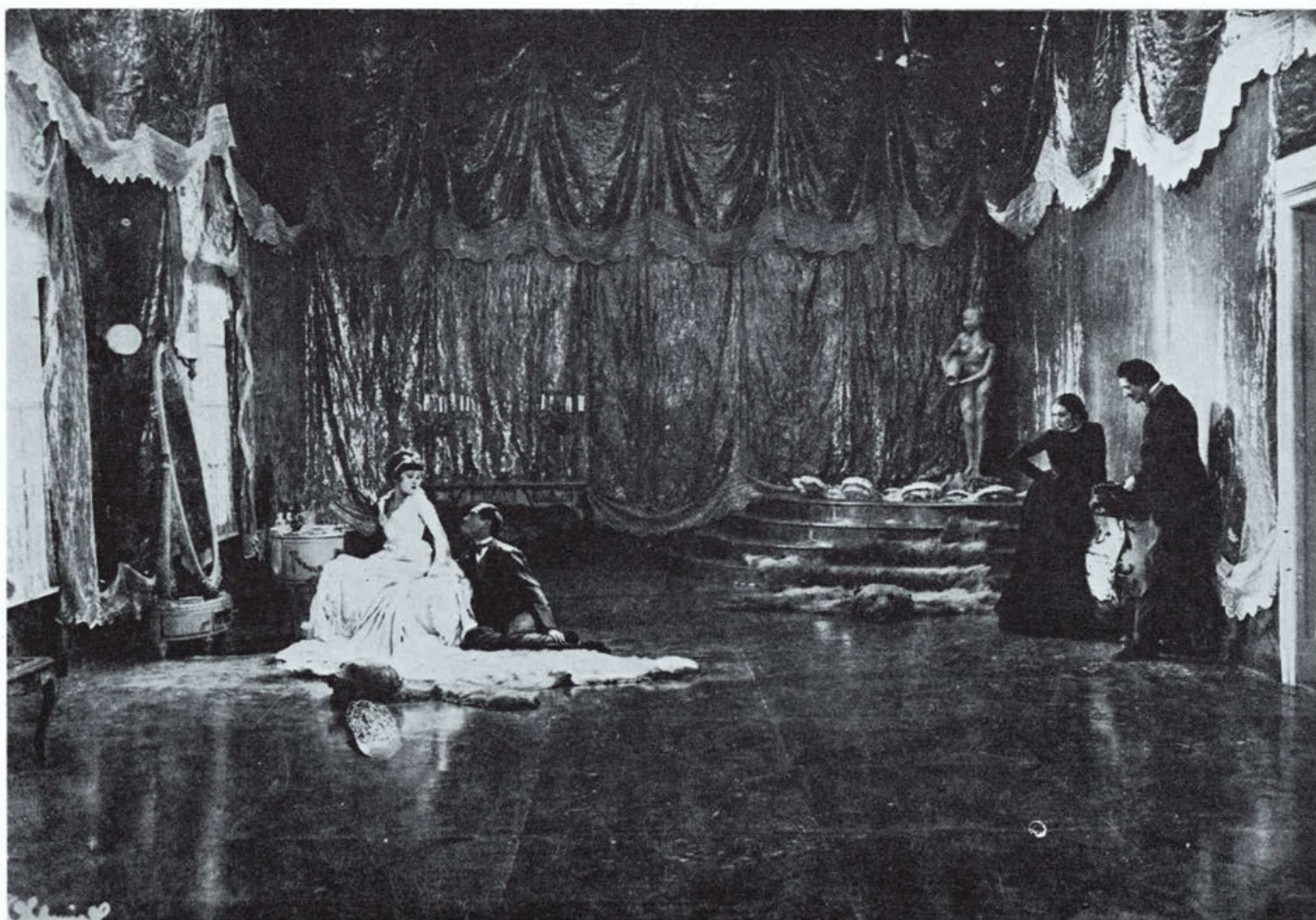
Lee Marvin, Dorothy Lamour and John Wayne in "Donovan's Reef".

Elizabeth Allen, gallantly rides it all and manages to look sexy at the same time. With Ford (as with Hawks) the treatment naturally works: she becomes accepted in a man's world and ends up, bruised but triumphant, in the imposing arms of Mr. Wayne.

Without itemising any further, it can be seen that *Donovan's Reef* contains most of the expected elements. And much of the rough humour spreads itself very well, messy jokes and all if you can take them. When the opening verve flags and the plot has to be manipulated, however, queasy things begin to happen. Nowadays, Ford seems to operate on a policy of all or nothing: having found some appealing half-caste children, he exploits them in a frenzy of coy face-pulling; having put a maudlin French priest into the act, he persuades Marcel Dalio to linger on every broken-accented sob; and, most preposterous of all, he stages a Nativity play with the three most bizarre and tough characters in the film impersonating strange, home-made deities. In these and other moments, Ford seems to be bludgeoning his audience into a total acceptance of his dream world, in which the grinning islanders are forever cavorting on the beach, and the Australian navy arrives for a punch-up and retreats singing "Waltzing Matilda".

Even so, a lot remains to be enjoyed. Aided by William Clothier's outstanding colour photography, Ford gives us more to look at than he has for some time. His beautifully judged camera style always finds room for the unexpected, captivating image—a red umbrella on a lawn, faces seen through a lattice, the little princess on her wicker-work throne, a dark expanse of forest broken by a shimmering waterfall—and the *chinoiserie* of the studio décor has its delights as well. There is an amiability, a childish gusto if you like, in the way he makes Lee Marvin play with his ridiculous toy train or count his spoils from the jukebox watched by a flower-bedecked Dorothy Lamour, a survivor from an earlier excursion to the South Seas. *Donovan's Reef*, in fact, contains memories of all kinds, recollected not in tranquillity but amid the hurly-burly of a busy location. What a pity that Ford strains our loyalty just a little too far at times.

JOHN GILLET



The real Avant-Garde

TOM MILNE

AVANT-GARDE? WELL, EVERYBODY KNOWS what that means, whether it involves black-robed ladies crawling endlessly over mysterious landscapes to encounter uninviting Freudian symbols (Maya Deren), or sad young men experiencing psycho-dramas of loneliness in musty rooms, with distorted images, piercingly experimental sound, and more Freudian symbols (Stan Brakhage). Things haven't changed a bit in the avant-garde world since the late Twenties in France, when technical trickery became an end in itself, when Germaine Dulac's *La Coquille et le Clergyman* became everybody's idea of what cinema was about, when theories (and films) about abstract cinema, surrealist cinema, pure cinema and all the rest of it, piled up around the names of Man Ray, Epstein, Duchamp, Dudley Murphy, Chomette, when everybody from Clair to Carné was doing it, and when poor old cinema itself was consigned to oblivion.*

The French cinema, in fact, had a perfectly sound and healthily developing mainstream which was temporarily stopped dead in its tracks by these onanistic games. Jean Vigo,

*For an excellent, uncharitable analysis of this period, see Jacques Brunius' *En Marge du Cinéma Français*.

one of the few genuinely avant-garde directors of the period (in the sense that his work took, and enabled the cinema to take, a step forward) was not deceived, and unerringly singled out Buñuel's *Un Chien Andalou* as the one avant-garde film of value. "Beware of the dog," he said at a session at the Vieux-Colombier in 1930, "it bites." Buñuel's film, in other words, has both purpose and passion, is a public experience rather than a private catharsis. But still the toothless monsters come trotting along at regular intervals, proudly displaying the same battered pack of surrealist principles and techniques, and adding another absolutely identical "avant-garde" film to the heap. Yet, if the French silent cinema has a lot to answer for, it has also quite a lot to be proud of.

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In 1914, the French cinema was at a stage of cheerful vulgarity. Informality reigned everywhere: directors filmed what, when and where they could, and scenarists deposited their ideas at a trading-post where they were paid in cash, the amount depending on whether the idea looked good, bad or indifferent. At the same time, though, the name of Louis Feuillade was about to be added to that of Méliès in the

cinema's roll of great figures. Born in 1873, a former bull-fighting critic, Feuillade—who joined Gaumont in 1906, quickly became his artistic director and directed innumerable films—was, in the best sense of both words, an opportunist and a realist. When the “Film d’Art” made its first abortive attempts to steer the cinema into the realms of high art, Feuillade followed suit, but having no cultural axe to grind, soon dropped the idea when its novelty value declined. In 1911, flourishing a manifesto of realism, he initiated the low-life series *La Vie telle qu'elle est*, partly to rival the similar Vitagraph series, partly because the need for more realism in acting and settings was only too apparent, and partly (as Henri Fescourt has suggested) because Gaumont was going through a financial crisis, and naturalism was the easiest way to save money on costumes and décor. In 1913–1914, with *Fantômas*, he produced his first serial, and his first masterpiece, followed in 1915 by *Les Vampires*, and in 1916–1917 by *Judex*.

Based on the fantastically successful novels of Pierre Souvestre and Marcel Allain, *Fantômas*, which launched the vogue for the *Perils of Pauline* type of thriller-serial, is distinguished from the rest of the clan—even Fritz Lang's much later effort, *Die Spinnen*—by Feuillade's brilliant sense of cinema, his unerring instinct for plastic beauty in the movement of his actors within or against the décor, and above all, his immense *joie de vivre*. Or rather, in *Fantômas* and *Les Vampires* anyway, *joie de crime*, for *Fantômas*, with his menacing black hood and hundred disguises, and Irma Vep (Vampire—get it?) in her slinky black tights, are super-arch-criminals, always leaving the hopeful police panting doggedly a pace or two behind, and as liable to cut somebody's throat or blow him into little pieces as look at him. This glorification of crime had a lot of people worried, and by the time *Judex* came along the arch-criminal had become an avenger, a sort of Robin Hood in flowing cape, dispensing justice in the black of night from underground lairs—to the gain of morality, perhaps, but at the cost of a certain inhibition.

The stories of *Fantômas* and *Les Vampires*, despite their prolific and frenzied inventiveness, freely dispensing corpses, poisons, perambulating pythons, mysterious death-dealing pens and guns, and any number of nameless hooded figures, need not be taken very seriously. What matters is the way Feuillade uses his material. Francis Lacassin has written: “Before Antonioni, Feuillade had discovered the secret of *grisaille*. He understood that there is nothing more beautiful than that urban poetry which springs from uneven streets, bleak, crumbling districts, silent and deserted, stretches of wasteland with strange buildings silhouetted in the distance.” There is more than a touch of truth in this. Much of *Fantômas* has the charm and nostalgia of old postcards, but this is not simply a quality conferred by age. Feuillade was well aware of the value of his backgrounds, and whether shooting in the streets of Paris, in heavily bourgeois or glitteringly rococo interiors, or the underground caverns and cellars where his heroes inevitably go to earth, every detail is exact and given full weight as being just as important as the actors or the action itself.

An excellent example in *Fantômas* is the scene where Lady Beltham goes to the theatre, sees an actor impersonating *Fantômas* in a play about the latter's life, and suddenly conceives a plan for substituting the actor for *Fantômas*, who is languishing in jail. Lady Beltham is in the foreground, in a box, head turned in profile so that we can see the idea registering. But behind her stretches the pit of the theatre, the people in the audience; and behind them, Legrand on the stage, acting out his play. Not only is this beautiful shot one which Gregg Toland, that arch-priest of deep-focus composition, would have been proud of, but Feuillade holds it longer than

strictly necessary for us to absorb the plot point, so that we can also absorb the sensation of the theatre and the life that goes on in it. (Obviously he himself was very fond of this shot; it is repeated in *Les Vampires*.)

Plastically speaking, things were perhaps made easier for Feuillade by his penchant for flowing black capes, black hoods and black tights, with their own ready-made mystery and beauty; but again it is the way Feuillade uses them, with an impeccable sense of how to marry clothes, movement, décor and light. One example: Lady Beltham is with *Fantômas* (she is in love with him) when the police arrive to arrest him; he leaves hurriedly but is trapped in the street and hustled into a waiting car. Feuillade then cuts back to a dark room inside the house; faint gleams of light filter through shutters with a shadowy figure against them; slowly the shutters are pushed open, to reveal Lady Beltham in her black dress silhouetted sharply against the brilliant daylight; she looks down at the street; then, slowly and sadly, closes the shutters, until she is once again a shadow against the filtered light.

The acting, for the most part, achieves a remarkable feeling of naturalness, partly because facial contortions and wild gestures are avoided in favour of simple mime and fluidity of movement, and partly because Feuillade never hurries his actors: if one of them has to receive a telegram, he is given ample time to open it, read it, digest its contents, then act. Taking his time within a scene, Feuillade makes up by losing no time between scenes, cutting swiftly from action to action without unnecessary linkage, rousing curiosity and excitement by his juxtapositions. In *Fantômas*, for example, we are introduced to Legrand in a sequence where we watch him elaborately making himself up as *Fantômas*; then follows the theatre scene already mentioned, when an intriguingly mysterious link is suggested between Lady Beltham and the actor. Only later, when Legrand visits Lady Beltham at home, is our whetted appetite satisfied and Lady Beltham's plot revealed.

Les Vampires, instead of being adapted from carefully plotted novels like *Fantômas*, was mostly improvised during filming and is naturally a much more chaotic work. But not inferior: its very nature, the very unexpectedness and inconsequence of its incidents, lends its episodes an added bizarre power. The extraordinary Musidora, whose playing of the sensual, sinuous and bloodthirsty Irma Vep roused a



Opposite page: Catherine Hessling and Raymond Guérin-Catelain in a scene from Renoir's “Nana”.
Right: “*Fantômas*”.

wholly justified paean of adoring tributes from popular audiences and poets alike, has described Feuillade characteristically at work on this film. Irritated by the failure of his Chief Vampire to turn up one day, Feuillade on the following day handed Musidora a gun, firmly ordered her to "Shoot him," filmed the scene, and embellished the script with a new Chief Vampire. As it appears in the film, perfectly integrated, this scene is merely another striking example of Irma Vep's insatiable love- and bloodlust.

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Fantômas and *Les Vampires*, roughly contemporary with *Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance*, undoubtedly gave the French cinema its first taste of the full possibilities of the medium. Beside these two films, the rest of the French product of the time pales into relative insignificance. One should not forget, though, the elegant comedies of Max Linder, to whom Chaplin gratefully acknowledged his debt, and who may well have been the first actor on any screen to demonstrate what it meant to underplay effectively; nor the films of Jean Durand, crazy comedies or action-packed Far West melodramas filmed in France's own Camargue, both featuring "Les Pouittes", Durand's own troupe of acrobat/stuntmen/comedians; nor, perhaps most of all, the enchantingly light comedies of Léonce Perret.

Perret, an actor-director, also made at this time one feature-length film, *L'Enfant de Paris* (1913), which has much the same charm as Griffith's early films. Based on the sentimental melodrama *Les Deux Orphelines*, it tells the story of an orphaned girl, kidnapped and put to work with a drunken cobbler, befriended by the cobbler's youthful apprentice, held to ransom, and finally, after much tribulation, restored to daddy, happily not dead after all. The opening scenes, in which the little girl's mother and father are both despatched with alarming swiftness, are totally undistinguished (though the vignettes of father, brave in topee and white uniform, fighting a heroic colonial war along with half-a-dozen compatriots against a dozen or so Arabs, have an undeniably bizarre charm). But as soon as the child arrives at the orphanage (a matter of minutes after the film begins), she starts to emerge quite unsentimentally as a person, and Perret conveys, easily and beautifully, her isolation. Telling detail begins to pile up. In the cold impersonality of the dormitory after

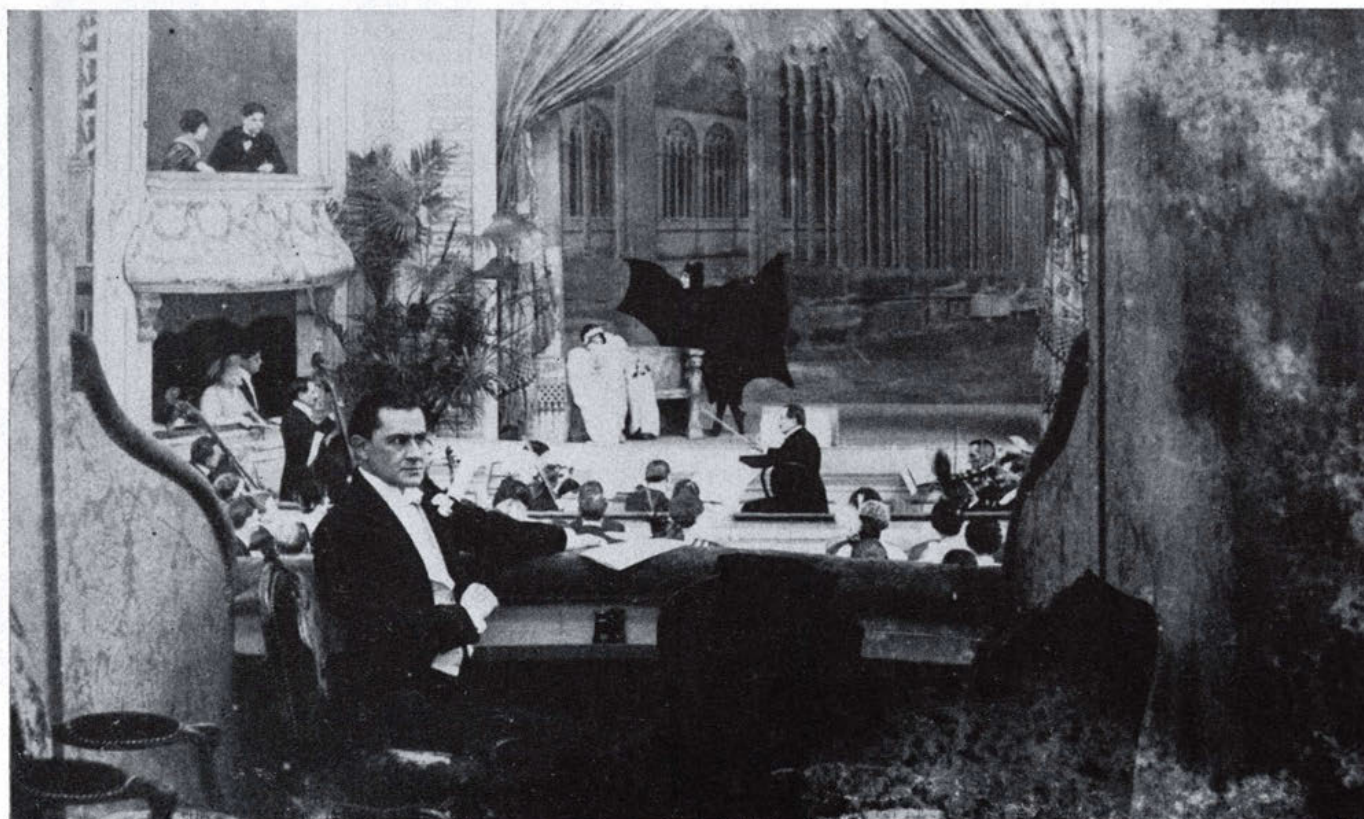
lights-out, she suddenly sits up in bed; the shadowy image of a teacher passes quietly, and she lies down. After a moment she sits up again, takes out a locket, kisses it, and breaks into tears; then, no nonsense, she dries her eyes on the sheet, and firmly begins to dress. Perret is equally successful with the boy who befriends her and turns detective to rescue her from the clutches of the crooks: from these two stereotypes emerge clear-cut, most engaging characters. Perret is good, too, in his use of décor, particularly the atmospheric, Carné-Prevert street-corner with its single lamp-standard, high wall, and glimpse of trees beyond, where the villain stumbles across the exhausted child after her escape from the orphanage; and in the marvellously atmospheric cobbler's shop, with the tiny triangular attic bedroom attached, which Perret uses to show two sets on the screen at the same time.

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L'Enfant de Paris tells a simple story and tells it well, with charm, ease and considerable technical fluidity. But in 1916 De Mille's *The Cheat* was shown in France, and was a revelation to Louis Delluc, who was to be the French cinema's first genuine critic and theorist. Whether because of any intrinsic quality in De Mille's direction, or—more likely—because of Sessue Hayakawa's traditionally Oriental inscrutability in the leading role, Delluc began to evolve his conception of a subjective cinema, which would deal as much with what people felt inside and did not do, as with what they showed outside and did do.

His first attempt to put his theories to work was in a script, *La Fête Espagnole*, directed by Germaine Dulac, but in *Le Silence* (1920; a film which seems to have disappeared) and *Fièvre* (1921), he became his own director. *Fièvre* captures with remarkable accuracy the atmosphere of a dockside bar in Marseilles: its tawdry inhabitants, drinking, playing cards, smoking, waiting; the arrival of sailors newly docked from the East, closely followed by an eager bevy of tarts; the gay drinking and dancing, building up to the inevitable brawl. Brilliantly observed, all this is well done, but from Delluc's own point of view the film was only partly successful in fulfilling his theories. The life under the surface is there all right, the longing and frustration, the bar as a prison which shuts away the freedom conjured by the ships anchored in the harbour outside. But Delluc has rather awkwardly over-

"Les Vampires": a shot repeated from "Fantômas" (see page 149).



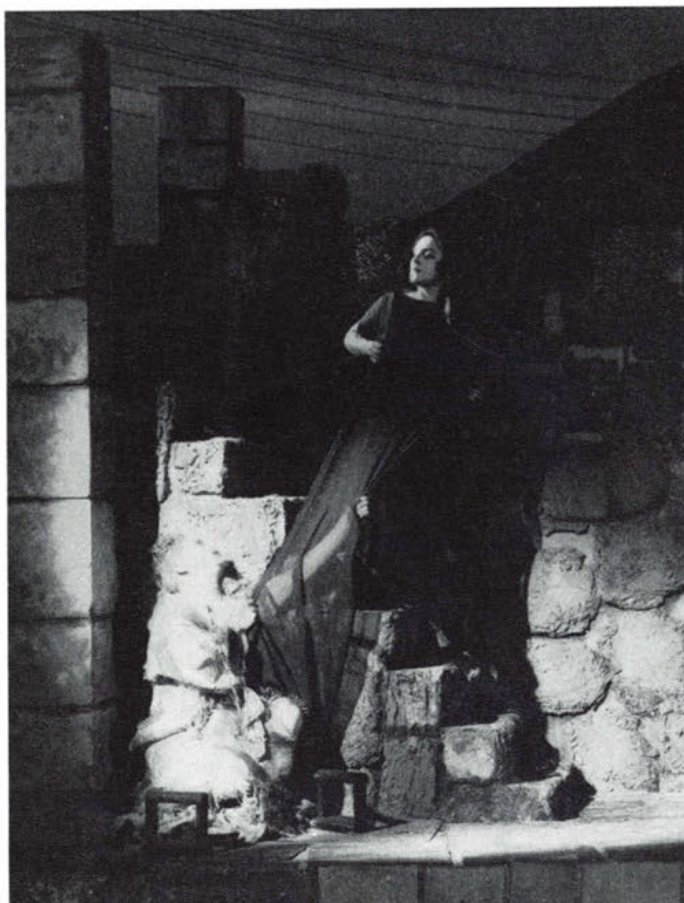
emphasised this by making the barmaid recognise one of the sailors as her former sweetheart, now married to a Chinese girl; and by concentrating the Chinese girl's whole isolation on her longing for a flower in a vase (which finally turns out to be artificial).

La Femme de Nulle Part (1922), on the other hand, reduces exterior action to a minimum, and is almost completely successful. A middle-aged woman returns on a sentimental journey to the house from which she had fled years before with her lover, and finds that the present owner, a young woman, is about to leave her husband in precisely the same way. Invited to stay the night, she wanders over the house and garden, trying to recapture the essence of her past experience in order to know how to react to the present situation. Round this theme Delluc has woven a web of memories and present sensations where past and present gradually become intermingled and indistinguishable. The opening shot, of a child's ball rolling across the screen towards the gates through which the past, in the shape of the strange woman, will enter the present, irresistibly though fleetingly suggests an early, halting draft for *Citizen Kane*; and the impression is increased by Delluc's persistence in viewing his heroine as an integral part of the décor which memory creates, just as Kane is part of his own fantasy Xanadu. Tracked about the windblown garden as she relives her radiant memories, and struggling with her present conscience within the oppressive walls of the house, Eve Francis—one of the great actresses of the silent cinema—here gives her most memorable performance, exquisitely controlled.

With his last film, *L'Inondation* (1924), Delluc for the first time based his script on a story by another writer, evidently feeling that he had achieved in *La Femme de Nulle Part* a satisfactory expression of the theme which had haunted him: the interaction of past and present on the mind. *L'Inondation* therefore uses a fairly simple anecdote about a village under flood, the death of a girl in the water, the hostility of the villagers to the man they suppose to have done away with her, and the final confession of the real culprit. The film beautifully creates its atmosphere in the evocation of the flooded countryside, with its endless stretches of water and grey, misty light, a lovely, desolate image of the characters and their situation.

Delluc had probably gone as far as he could go, and Germaine Dulac, in *La Souriante Madame Beudet* (1923), took his work one stage further, and at the same time revealed the dead end to which that particular line was leading. *La Souriante Madame Beudet* again takes a trifling story about a young woman, akin to Emma Bovary, bored to death by her pompous husband and dreaming of an imaginary lover, who is tempted by her husband's constant mock threats at committing suicide with an empty gun, to load the revolver. In an ironic ending, she is seized by remorse and tries to stop him from using the gun; thinking that she has planned to kill herself, he consoles her, and life goes on as before. The situation is a Delluc one; so is Germaine Dermoz' very simple but very effective performance; and the attention to detail, the way she constantly pushes a vase artistically off-centre on a table, for example, and her husband automatically pushes it back centre again. Where Dulac differs from Delluc is that she adds images created by the imagination to those supplied by memory. When Madame Beudet is particularly irritated by her husband and angrily flips over the pages of a magazine, a handsome tennis-player leaps from the page, full-size, as an ardent lover; later, she is attacked by a vision of her husband as a monstrous ogre climbing in at her window and roaring with laughter. In *La Souriante Madame Beudet* it works, but this was the first step on the path which was to lead to all those symbolic distortions and superimpositions used without purpose in the later avant-garde films, including Dulac's own.

Before this happened, however, a handful of films used the whole bag of tricks to excellent effect. One was Marcel



Mosjoukine's "Le Brasier Ardent".

L'Herbier's *Eldorado* (1922), perhaps this director's only completely satisfactory film, if one excepts *Feu Mathias Pascal* in which the lion's share of the credit goes to Ivan Mosjoukine's splendid performance. Elsewhere L'Herbier's aestheticism, at its worst in the cubist extravaganza *L'Inhumaine*, overflows disastrously, but in *Eldorado* (with Eve Francis again), his pictorial sense is brilliantly used to evoke the black and white contrasts of a painter's view of a hot and dusty Spain. Two other successes were due to Russian émigré directors, perhaps because they were less inhibited as well as less aesthetic in their approach. Volkoff's *Kean* (1924) is justly celebrated for the sequence in the tavern where, in the smoky, beery atmosphere, the camera works itself up into an accelerating frenzy, accompanying Kean in his drunken, nightmarish dance. The part of Kean was played by the extraordinary Russian actor Ivan Mosjoukine, and in 1923 he directed his own weird, often hauntingly beautiful *Le Brasier Ardent*, a kaleidoscopic distortion of reality into fantasy, fantasy into reality, in which a woman is haunted by a nightmare in which she is impelled towards a strange man tied to a burning stake, and then finds her real life taking on the shape of her dream. Mosjoukine never directed another film: more's the pity.

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Pursuing a more solitary, individualistic line was Abel Gance, to whom Delluc addressed his famous apostrophe: "If ever you are told that your visions are too grandiose, I hope you will laugh quietly to yourself. A vision can never be too grand." After fairly humble, though experimental beginnings during the First World War in macabre exercises like *Le Masque d'Horreur* and *La Folie du Docteur Tube*, he directed a series of films in which originality and grandeur rubbed shoulders with sentimentality and banality. In *Napoléon* (1927), his greatest film, the tendency to absurdity is

still there, but is almost crushed by the sheer power of his vision. Napoleon, hunted by a bloodthirsty rabble in Corsica, has only to stand in majestic silence for the crowd to fall back in awe; Gance then superimposes the image of an eagle on Napoleon as he stands before the crowd—impossible, but it comes off.

Gance's technical tricks and discoveries are probably too well known to need detailing at length here—the camera thrown like a ball during a snowball fight, or tied to the back of a horse, the triptych screen projecting three separate images and flooding the screen with movement or showing a pensive Napoleon flanked by his armies. The camera sometimes seems almost drunk with its own new-found power of movement; but, again, it works. The sequences showing Napoleon battling alone with his tiny boat in a raging sea, intercut with the equally stormy scenes back in Paris in the Convention, are climaxed by having the camera swing freely back and forth like a pendulum from the roof high above the quarrelling Deputies. The effect is vertiginous, a dislocation both of the world of man and of nature. Like Griffith, Gance had an unfortunate tendency to pompous subtitles, but this overflows only rarely into his images (for example, the soldier who asks for the name of his inspiring leader, then expires happily). For the most part the detail is exemplary, particularly in the handling of crowds and action scenes: the torrential rain during the attack on Petit-Gibraltar, a hand projecting starkly from a chilling pool of mud. As with Huston's *The Red Badge of Courage*, Gance's images often take on the hazy beauty of old engravings.

Equally individual, though working in a more conventional line, was Raymond Bernard. His early efforts included *La Maison Vide* (1921), very much in the style of his brother Jean-Jacques Bernard's "théâtre du silence", but he then turned to action spectacle with *Le Miracle des Loups* (1924), reputedly magnificent, and *Le Joueur d'Echecs* (1927), certainly magnificent. *Le Joueur d'Echecs* is set in the Russia of Catherine the Great, and tells the strange story of a young Pole who causes offence and is smuggled to freedom, disguised as an automaton chess-player, by the weird Baron Kempelen. The acting is particularly good, with a performance of completely modern sophistication by Edith Jehanne as the heroine, and equally fine character sketches from Charles Dullin and Pierre Blanchar, but the film is chiefly memorable as a brilliant piece of *mise en scène*, full of *tours de force*: the battle sequence, where an opening shot of a tranquil hillside, with tiny puffs of

smoke gradually dotting between the trees, is suddenly wiped away by a close-up onrush of cavalry right across the screen; the fabulous reconstruction of the Winter Palace, where the Empress challenges the automaton to a chess game, and when it angrily sweeps the pieces from the board, majestically decrees that the automaton must be taken away and summarily shot; Baron Kempelen's bizarre salon, studded with mechanical figures draped in white sheets, with the hallucinating scene in which the villain is done to death by an army of scimitar-waving automata.

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Feuillade's narrative fluidity and plastic sense; Delluc's subjective sensibility; the spectacular power of Gance and Bernard: so far, so good, but for the most part these films were two-dimensional, operating successfully on their own particular levels, but without true complexity, either telling an exciting tale, or presenting a human being's soul-state, or creating a picture-book historical figure. In 1926, the progress was carried a stage further by Renoir's *Nana*, not necessarily the best or most successful film of the period (Catherine Hessling's performance in the leading role is a grave flaw), but one which brought a new dimension and density, an ability to relate subject and context, to present narrative, character and milieu as a fusion of interlocking elements. Made under the direct stimulus of *Foolish Wives*, a film which Renoir saw over and over again in a shock of wonderment at the rich complexity of Stroheim's world, *Nana* is perhaps France's first realist film, not in the sense that it tried to present facts (naturalism), but in that it attempted to work outwards from facts, to make an imaginative creation *from* the facts.

Nana is not simply a narrative of its heroine's downfall, a study of her state of mind, or a picture of the splendours and miseries of her career as a high-class slut, but an attempt to analyse all the contributory and interacting factors: her own character, background and ambition; the society in which she lives, viewed at various levels (a clear foreshadowing of the master-servant relationship taken up in *La Règle du Jeu* and *Diary of a Chambermaid*); the varying personalities of her lovers and the demands they make on her; the importance of milieu, ranging from the sordid little theatre with its outer splendours, the first taste of luxury, the return to the bustle of the Bal Mabille, the race-track, the insane folly of Nana's later, glittering apartments, the stable where Vandeuves kills himself. Renoir's importance is already indicated by his ability to draw all his strands together in a single shot. For example, the early sequence where the theatre manager leeringly brings the rich, elderly Comte Muffat to Nana's dressing-room. Muffat, redolent of money, good breeding and a distaste for his surroundings, hesitates in the doorway, as the manager waits encouragingly, Nana's hairdresser giggles knowingly, and Nana herself peeps coyly from behind a screen. A pause, then the camera slowly pans to take in a basin of dirty water, a shabby dressing-table, a toothless comb snagged with strands of hair. Succinctly Renoir makes his comment: a bargain is inevitable, only the details remain to be fixed.

Nana is a sharp, uncompromising analysis of human weakness, in its own way just as cruel as Stroheim's work—in Muffat's humiliation, made to grovel like a dog by Nana; in Georges' suicide with scissors in a glittering apartment; in Vandeuves' choice of a stable, beside his favourite horse, to die; and in the horrible justness of Nana's death, disfigured by smallpox. But Renoir has added his own personal dimension of humanity to this parade of luxurious vice: there is a pity, an understanding of Nana and her lovers, of the fact that they are mutually destructive, which Stroheim only rarely accorded to his characters. *Nana*, in fact, is the first undeniable intimation of the greatness of Renoir.



Gance's "Napoléon": the escape from Corsica.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE WESTERN, from Silents to Cinerama. By George N. Fenin and William K. Everson. Illustrated. (Orion Press, New York, \$12.50).

ALTHOUGH FULL-SCALE STUDIES of the Western have been published in both Italian and French, there has up to now been no thorough treatment of this type of film in English. No one has previously attempted to document the growth of the Western from its primitive, silent, two-reel beginnings to its more sophisticated, technicolored, wide-screen forms; nor has there been any sustained effort to explain the perennial fascination of what is surely the most ancient of American film genres. The merit of the present volume is that it sets out to meet an obvious need. More than this: since it speaks rather patronisingly of the earlier foreign studies, necessarily inaccurate and incomplete (the present authors explain) in a way that is "almost unavoidable when one is working so far from the bulk of the source material," this book offers itself as the definitive study of the Western, summarising the trends of all the material from both the cinema and television, while offering parenthetically to put the films in some sort of critical order as well.

The ambition to be definitive is everywhere; and this is perhaps what makes *The Western* at first disappointing, and then finally so exasperating to read. Even the size and lavish production of the volume gives the appearance of more substance than the book really contains; while the style of writing, as if in the effort to attain an authoritative objectivity, remains monotonously flat and factual, only surprising us on occasion with an intrusively dismissive aside. Yet these asides are instructive: they reveal the authors' true interests, incidentally making the volume less objective, and ultimately much less definitive, than the general tone of voice endeavours to suggest. First, and inescapably, the writers are interested in the essentially simple-minded quality of the majority of Westerns, and one feels throughout the book a hankering for the good old silent days. They value films more for their feeling of historical accuracy than for what they may have achieved in the realm of myth or art. They are mistrustful (and hence dismissive) of any Westerns that might seem to imply some ulterior significance which could possibly be explained in social or psychological terms—of any films, in short, that could be accused of taking themselves too seriously. Hence, while Hopalong Cassidy and the singing Westerns of Gene Autry and Roy Rogers each get a chapter to themselves, and there are lengthy descriptions of early Westerns from Griffith, Ince, Mix and Hart, the works of Anthony Mann and Howard Hawks receive short shrift in fewer than twenty lines each, Robert Aldrich gets one reference, and there is no mention at all of the films by Robert Parrish, Budd Boetticher or Sam Peckinpah.

Not that I would wish to impose upon these authors a more fashionable taste than they do in fact display; rather that, in a book so 'authoritative', they should be more aware than they seem to be of how (for instance) Hawks is now frequently regarded, and should thus be prepared to give us something more illuminating about *Rio Bravo* than the assertion that it is "overly psychological and talkative." Even if this assertion were true, it can hardly now be regarded as obvious. Although the book refers to Cinerama, in its attitude and general approach to films it seems already at least ten years out of date. Clearly, Messrs. Fenin and Everson are scarcely aware of *Rio Bravo* as a film (let alone of controversial essays by Robin Wood and Henri Agel!). Their discussions revolve endlessly round the various themes of Westerns and the possible convolutions of the basic plots: there is never any concern with the sensitivity of treatment, flexibility of performances, distinction of photography or music, with all the elusively emotive elements of the art. *Shane* and *High Noon*, it seems to me, are always test films in this way: so magnificent in conception and in many of the local effects, so disappointing in execution because of their thematic

heavy-handedness, the fatal inner failures of the delicacy of their art. Yet whenever Messrs. Fenin and Everson mention these films, it is always with a totally uncritical acceptance of the quality they are assumed to have.

My basic dissatisfaction with this study, then, is that it is insufficiently critical of the films it refers to; that it nowhere declares its own preconceptions openly or rigorously challenges those of other people; and that, in the absence of critical method, it is forced to value Westerns by the bulk of their production and thus give more space to a number of television serials than it does to any one distinguished product of an individual mind. *The Lone Ranger* gets as much attention as the Westerns of John Ford. Only Hart's *Hell's Hinges* is described in full, and even then in a way which aims less to help us fully to understand the film than to provide us with a substitute for seeing it.

No matter how close these authors may have been to "the bulk of the source material," their book falls far short of being a definitive study. Instead, it gives us an interesting collection of facts, paying tribute to the honourable roles of stuntman and second-unit director, and dealing in some detail with the way certain trick-effects are achieved. Yet for all the value the authors place on historical accuracy in films, they nowhere acknowledge the sources of their information, and offer not so much as a hint of a useful bibliography or chronological list of films and directors—something that Jean-Louis Rieupreyrou's supposedly less accurate study *Le Western* was still thoughtful enough to provide.

PETER HARCOURT

MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI, a study by Ian Cameron. (Movie Magazine Ltd., 3s. 6d.)

ANTONIONI, by Philip Strick. (Motion Publications, 2s. 6d.)

IAN CAMERON'S MOVIE MONOGRAPH on Antonioni is in many ways a model of the genre. It is elegantly produced and (for the most part) elegantly written; it is painstaking, accurate and exhaustive, and contains an excellent filmography. As a scholastic manual and work of reference it is very good indeed.

Unfortunately these academic and scholarly virtues, which are largely neutral or even negative, are not reinforced by any positive virtues of criticism, and are occasionally undermined by what seem to me curious major errors of judgment. No, or very few, misprints, solecisms, mistakes, minor errors or omissions; but at the same time no, or very few, incisive or stimulating judgments, and no serious attempt to grapple with difficulties of content in Antonioni's films, or for that matter with eccentricities of form. All the obvious points are made about functional camerawork, symbolism, non-communication, but there is not much said about the more outrageous visual effects (and no one can deny that Antonioni's effects are occasionally outrageous), nor about the questions of individual and social morality which are implicit if not explicit at all points in his work. Cameron is clearly determined to avoid extra-cinematic comments here and to confine himself rigorously to the evidence. This principle is admirable in theory, but in practice it means that most of his general comments tend to be trivial, and that on the occasions when they are not they can be wildly off the mark. For example, he tries to show that *L'Avventura* and even more surprisingly *La Notte* are somehow more optimistic than the rest of Antonioni's work, and that *L'Eclisse* closes off the trilogy with a return to pessimism.

According to Cameron, there is hope in the end of *La Notte* because it says so in the script, and because the dawn always symbolises hope. But it is well known that the ending of the script was a sop to the producers, who wanted an up-beat ending to the movie. As an ending it contradicts the general sense of the film—or would do so were it not contradicted in its turn by the *mise en scène*, which to my mind at least categorically reasserts the pessimistic note which dominates the rest. Besides, why should a dawn rising on the ruins of a marriage and another long day of self-deception symbolise anything but itself? Again, in the case of *L'Eclisse* why should nightfall symbolise the end of anything—except perhaps the end of Piero and Vittoria's affair? And if Piero and Vittoria do break up, because they have failed to communicate, is this necessarily a ground for total despair? Only if you think that every love affair should last a life-time and that communication is the be-all and end-all of existence. And there is no evidence that Antonioni thinks either of these things.

Philip Strick, in his rival essay for Motion Publications, is more realistic in this respect. Not for him a positivistic method of description covering up some highly conventional moral judgments, for he

is more ambitious in his analysis and more open about his own commitment. Many of the points he makes are debatable; his prose is occasionally turgid; he is a bit glib with his "alienation" and suchlike; and like Cameron he tends to find unnecessary symbols in unlikely places (he has an obsession with mushroom-shaped objects in *L'Eclisse* which verges on the pathological); but otherwise he is generally more interesting and thought-provoking than Cameron, and really does try to get to grips with the main problem.

It should be added that the *Motion* monograph (although, again, its filmography is excellent) is also less well presented (and cheaper) than its counterpart from the *Movie* stable. The choice is therefore straightforward: Cameron in the long run probably more useful; for immediate reading Strick certainly more worthwhile.

GEOFFREY NOWELL-SMITH

BOOKS RECEIVED

ALEXANDRE ASTRUC. By Raymond Bellour. (Editions Seghers, Paris, 7.10 N.F.).

ROBERT BRESSON. By Michel Estève. (Editions Seghers, Paris, 7.10 N.F.).

THE BRITISH NATIONAL FILM CATALOGUE, Vol. 1, No. 1. Edited by Bernard Chibnall. (British National Film Catalogue, Ltd., 55a Welbeck Street, London, W.1. Available by subscription.)

FILM SURVEY 1. Compiled by David Moore, John Turner and Peter Armitage. (Film Magazine, 42 Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1. 7s. 6d.)

THE INNOCENT EYE.: the life of Robert J. Flaherty. By Arthur Calder-Marshall, based on research material by Paul Rotha and Basil Wright. (W. H. Allen, 42s.)

INSIDE DAISY CLOVER. By Gavin Lambert. (Hamish Hamilton, 18s.)

MANUAL OF SOUND RECORDING. By John Aldred. (Fountain Press, 75s.)

THE MOVIEGOER. By Walker Percy. (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 18s.)

QU'EST-CE QUE LE CINEMA? Vol. IV. By André Bazin. (Editions du Cerf, Paris, 7.80 N.F.).

THE TECHNIQUE OF DOCUMENTARY FILM PRODUCTION. By W. Hugh Baddeley. (Focal Press, 42s.).

CORRESPONDENCE

Blockbusting

The Editor, SIGHT AND SOUND

SIR,—I enjoyed the article *Theory and Practice of Blockbusting* in the Spring issue of SIGHT AND SOUND. It was interesting because in March this year I made a film survey at my school, in which the subjects were asked to give the ten best films they had seen in order. The resultant top ten included eight blockbusters (following your definition roughly). The hundred boys whom I asked were all aged between 16 and 18 and most of them were doing G.C.E. at Ordinary or Advanced levels—many were aiming at University.

I worked out the top films by giving ten points to the first film on each person's list, nine to the second and so on down to one point for the tenth. Out of the 350 different films mentioned the following ten headed the list: *Guns of Navarone* (316 points); *Ben Hur* (309); *The Magnificent Seven* (264); *West Side Story* (239); *Dr. No* (163); *El Cid* (146); *The Longest Day* (104); *South Pacific* (99); *Spartacus* (93); *Bridge on the River Kwai* (85).

The film most people wanted to see was *Lawrence of Arabia* (about 60 per cent) and of course in the future *Cleopatra* (practically unanimous). Some obscure cineastes would like to see "anything of Antonioni" or Welles' *Citizen Kane*, which nobody seemed to have seen.

The top actors were Alec Guinness (astounding, since there was hardly a mention of any of his films), Peter Sellers, Dirk Bogarde and Peter Ustinov. Sophia Loren topped the actresses, closely followed by Natalie Wood and Audrey Hepburn. I was contemplating asking for top directors, but I quickly realised that few people knew the names of any, let alone what films they had made.

Yours faithfully,

NIGEL BURWOOD

Felixstowe,
Suffolk.

Truffaut and the Critics

SIR,—Criticism of criticism is often sterile, but I am sure that too many critics of films have grown lazy; they enjoy their work without giving any feeling that they hold themselves responsible to that work—to the creative artists and their audiences. Responsibility must not be confused with commitment: it simply means that the best must be encouraged at the expense of the worst. A serious film receives an amount of reviewing and criticism that no novel, unless it is to be a best-seller, ever gets. Furthermore a serious film needs a higher percentage of the filmgoing audience to support it than a novel does of the serious reading public. So the director depends on the critic for his very ability to continue, not merely for guidance.

That newspaper reviewing is generally irresponsible is a commonplace, and to some extent unavoidable owing to the conditions of working; but that a magazine such as SIGHT AND SOUND should not attempt consistently to combat reviewing, opposing it with good academic (but without the overtones of that word) criticism, is very worrying. The author who is struggling to get to grips with his technique and himself can flourish in anonymity, but the director must have good critics.

One case which illustrates this well is that of Truffaut. What his development might have been is impossible to say, but, to me at least, *Jules et Jim* was a bitter disappointment, and yet inevitable after the reaction to *Tirez sur le Pianiste*. *Les Quatre Cents Coups* was undoubtedly an achievement, not however, as many people are realising in retrospect, as important as it was said to be at the time. In *Tirez* Truffaut was obviously exploring more immediate problems (both in time and feeling) and beginning to use the camera as a really effective method of doing so. If the film had not been almost driven off the screen I would send people back to look at the effect of the slow dissolves in the love scene, the horrifying personal urgency of the suicide of Charlie's wife and the death in the snow. These are the parts which have been imitated in England and France, yet the critics in general saw fit to pick out only the tasteless inset joke and the quotations from Hollywood...

A few months ago, in a television programme celebrating the tenth anniversary of the N.F.T., the announcer said, "The N.F.T. owes much of its success to its showing of the best foreign films; films such as *Shoot the Pianist*." And then an extract was shown. Where did this adjective "best" come from? It should have come from SIGHT AND SOUND.

I am not campaigning for the recognition of a film I happened to like. The film has been recognised gradually but too late. What I would like to suggest is that careful criticism could have brought us something better than the slight *Jules et Jim*. Similarly, although I personally did not enjoy *Paris Nous Appartient*, I am quite certain that Rivette's next film cannot now be as interesting as it might have been if the critics had attacked the reviewers.

The sense of undisciplined watching and writing and the lack of responsibility should be obvious. Unfounded disagreement between critics usually means that each one is seeking his own salvation in the work of art, and not looking for the truth. Certainly a magazine need not hold itself responsible for the opinions expressed in it, but this does not give anyone with an opinion the right to air it—fulsome praise is often more harmful than ignorant condemnation. I am sure that a film needs at least half a dozen visits before it can properly be expounded, and even then some soul-searching must be necessary before something so influential and so important is printed. I would therefore like to make a plea to SIGHT AND SOUND for less glib and more responsible criticism.

Yours faithfully,
G. C. NICHOLLS

Balterley,
Cheshire.

Lost Films (continued)

SIR,—I enjoyed Herman G. Weinberg's invaluable two-part article "The Legion of Lost Films". However, I was surprised by the omission of three rather important "lost films." I refer to Eisenstein's *1905* and *The General Line*, and Hitchcock's *Number Thirteen*.

Eisenstein began work on *1905* in 1925. The film, a spectacle celebrating the 1905 Revolution, was produced by Goskino of Moscow, and photographed by Tisse from a scenario by Nina Agadzhanova-Shutko. When shooting had been half completed, Eisenstein decided to concentrate on a single episode, the mutiny on the Battleship *Potemkin*. The other episodes were never edited.

The General Line, produced by Sovkino in 1927, dealt with the effects on Russian agriculture resulting from the policy of collectivisation. Eisenstein's assignment to *October* halted production at the halfway mark, and when he returned to the project a year later, it

was completely rewritten by himself and Alexandrov as a more personal story and re-photographed by Tisse as *Old and New* (shown in England as *The General Line*).

I would like some additional information myself on Hitchcock's *Number Thirteen*. All that I have found on the film is that it was his initial effort, produced in 1922.

Also, in regard to the Godard article-interview, the cursory film background failed to mention Godard's participation in the "Sloth" episode of *The Seven Deadly Sins*.

Janesville,
Wisconsin.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN SCOBIE

SIR,—One of the rewards of research, such as that contained in "The Lost Films" article, is that it brings additional research to light. I am grateful to all those who wrote in about *Homunculus*, *Salt of the Earth*, *Roi Pausole*, *Neighbours* and Stroheim's *Merry Widow*. Someone in Switzerland even sent me a still of *Homunculus* to prove it really existed. I was glad to learn that prints of both it and *Roi Pausole* were in European archives, though the short footage of the latter does suggest an incomplete film. Still, I would rather see it than the next film by almost anyone else currently around save a handful of names, and even then I'd still want to see it.

As to *Ivan the Terrible* Part 2, my old friend Marie Seton must be perfectly right in saying that she was *not* told in Moscow it was never shot. As to where I got my "misinformation", I hope she will believe me that I absolutely did read it somewhere, I no longer remember where, or I certainly would not have said so. Why should I? The purpose of a piece like "The Lost Films" is not only to correlate a large number of often unknown and certainly widely scattered facts but also to stir up new facts. That's how history rights itself.

Yours faithfully,
HERMAN G. WEINBERG
New York, 23.

Cinema 25

SIR,—May I beg space in your columns to bring notice to your readers of the existence of CINEMA 25. Cinema 25 was formed in 1957 by a group of students attending the lectures organised by the British Film Institute for the University of London on the subject of film history, art and appreciation. The aims of the Group are to foster the study of film and encourage research into all aspects of cinema; to meet in informal conditions representatives of the cinema industry; to gain wider recognition of the need for the provision of more facilities for the study of film. Individual members are encouraged to present programmes or lead discussions of their own choice. The Group is non-political and is composed of people with a common interest in cinema and a desire to talk about this interest to other people. Guest speakers who in the past have visited the Group include Anthony Asquith, Ted Willis, Bessie Love, Isa Miranda, Arne Sucksdorff, John Trevelyan and Michael Carreras.

We are anxious to acquire more members. Details of membership may be obtained on application to the Secretary at the address below.

Yours faithfully,
DEREK E. EASTAWAY,
Secretary
12 Ovington Square,
London, S.W.3.

Australian Film History

SIR,—I am preparing a series of Monographs to be published by the Australian Film Institute. The series, as at present conceived, deals with the history of the Australian silent film during the period 1896 to 1928.

While the great source of relevant information is the excellent Film Division of the National Library of Australia, as its officers know all too well, much important material both on celluloid and on paper has not yet been unearthed, let alone collected. It is known that early Australian films found their way to Europe, the U.S.A. and, no doubt, farther afield. Prints, negatives and stills of old Australian films, published reviews, advertisements and posters—all these are of inestimable value in discovering the historical and artistic truth about old films.

May I appeal to readers of SIGHT AND SOUND for help? I should be more than grateful if readers who have access to, or knowledge of, such material would get in touch with me.

Yours faithfully,
M. JAMES WASSON
1 Jacka Crescent,
Campbell,
Canberra, A.C.T.,
Australia.

THE AQUARIUM

continued from page 139

curious. At the outset she was passive, shut up in herself; now she begins to look around her, consciously ferreting out impressions, and as a result of what she sees her fear may slacken or tighten its hold. She is learning detachment. All this isn't very obvious, it's just a slight shift of attitude. One would have to get outside her to be more precise about it. But the point is that one mustn't cheat: *one never knows just what she's thinking . . .*

"It isn't very obvious," "just a slight shift," "one never knows . . ." The whole difficulty turns on this essential uncertainty. This is a cinema of themes rather than problems: waiting in *Cléo*, wandering in *Il Grido*, timidity in *Tirez sur le Pianiste*, innocence in *Jules et Jim*. And these themes are not signposted for the audience in advance, as the cinema of symbols allows itself to be flattened out by its codes and rules. Instead, they well up through the movement of the narrative, the meaning that will gradually be defined for us through a succession of images. The theme is the hidden thread which links apparently insignificant details.

Let us hope that the cineaste will never feel that he has to tell us the meaning, that he will never allow us to see the thread. There are things which can't be shown: the cinema is an active spectacle, to which only the spectator holds the key.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

20th CENTURY-FOX for *The Leopard*, *The Condemned of Altona*, *The Star*.
WARNER-PATHE for *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?*, *Bordertown*, *Flamingo Road*.
WARNER-PATHE/ANGLO AMALGAMATED for *The Fall of the House of Usher*.
PARAMOUNT PICTURES for *Hud*, *Donovan's Reef*.
BLC/COLUMBIA for *The Damned*.
COLUMBIA PICTURES for *The Lady from Shanghai*.
COLUMBIA/HAWK FILMS for *Dr. Strangelove: Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*.
RANK FILM DISTRIBUTORS for *The Birds*.
RANK/SAMUEL BRONSTON for *The Fall of the Roman Empire*.
GALA FILM DISTRIBUTORS for *Les Abysses*, *Eight and a Half*, *Salvatore Giuliano*.
MONDIAL FILMS for *Moderato Cantabile*.
CONNOISSEUR FILMS for *Banditi a Orgosolo*.
SEBRICON for *Cleo de 5 à 7*.
UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL for *The Chalk Garden*.
DREW ASSOCIATES for *Jane*, photograph of Richard Leacock.
MAYLES FILMS for *Showman*.
SPRINGBOK FILMS for *The Servant*.
ARCO FILM-CINERIZ-LYRE FILM for *Rogopag*.
SOFRACINA for *Le Joli Mai*.
TITANUS-SICILIA for *I Fidanzati*.
SANCRO FILM/FAIR FILM/FILM MARCEAU/ PROCINEX-COCINOR for *The Queen Bee*.
SHOCHIKU for *Harakiri*.
PETER BROOK for *Lord of the Flies*.
DOROTHY OSHLAG for *The Cool World*.
ANTONY BALCH FILMS for *Freaks*.
CYNTHIA GRENIER for photograph of Crystal Star prize-winners.
LA CINEMATHEQUE FRANCAISE for *Nana*, *Les Vampires*.
NATIONAL FILM ARCHIVE for *Fantômas*, *Napoléon*, *Le Brasier Ardent*.

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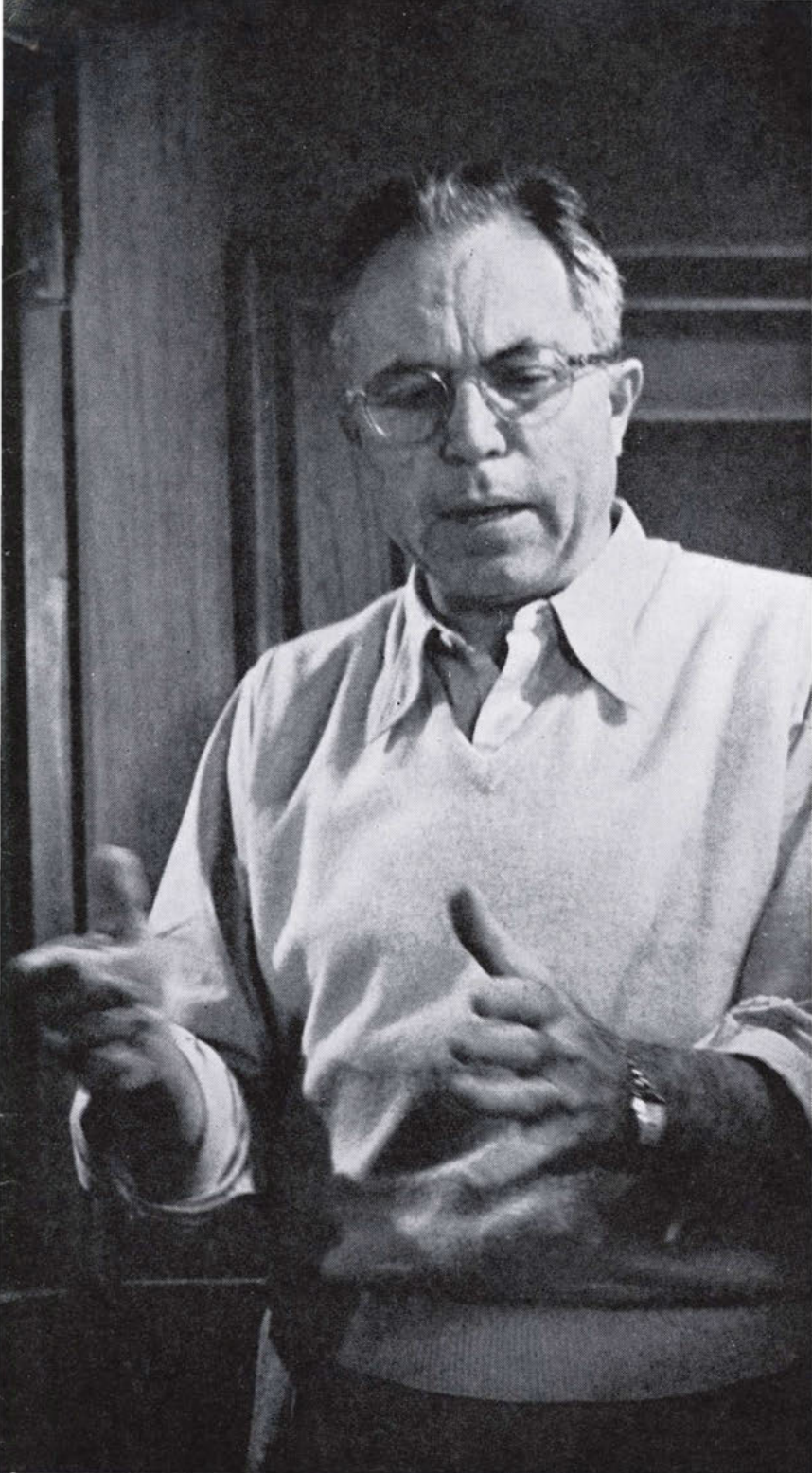
A list of back numbers of SIGHT AND SOUND is available on request from the Publications Department, British Film Institute, 81 Dean Street, London, W.1. Back numbers in stock include:

Vol. 22 No. 4	Vol. 23 No. 3
Vol. 27 No. 2	Vol. 30 No. 1

A GUIDE TO CURRENT FILMS

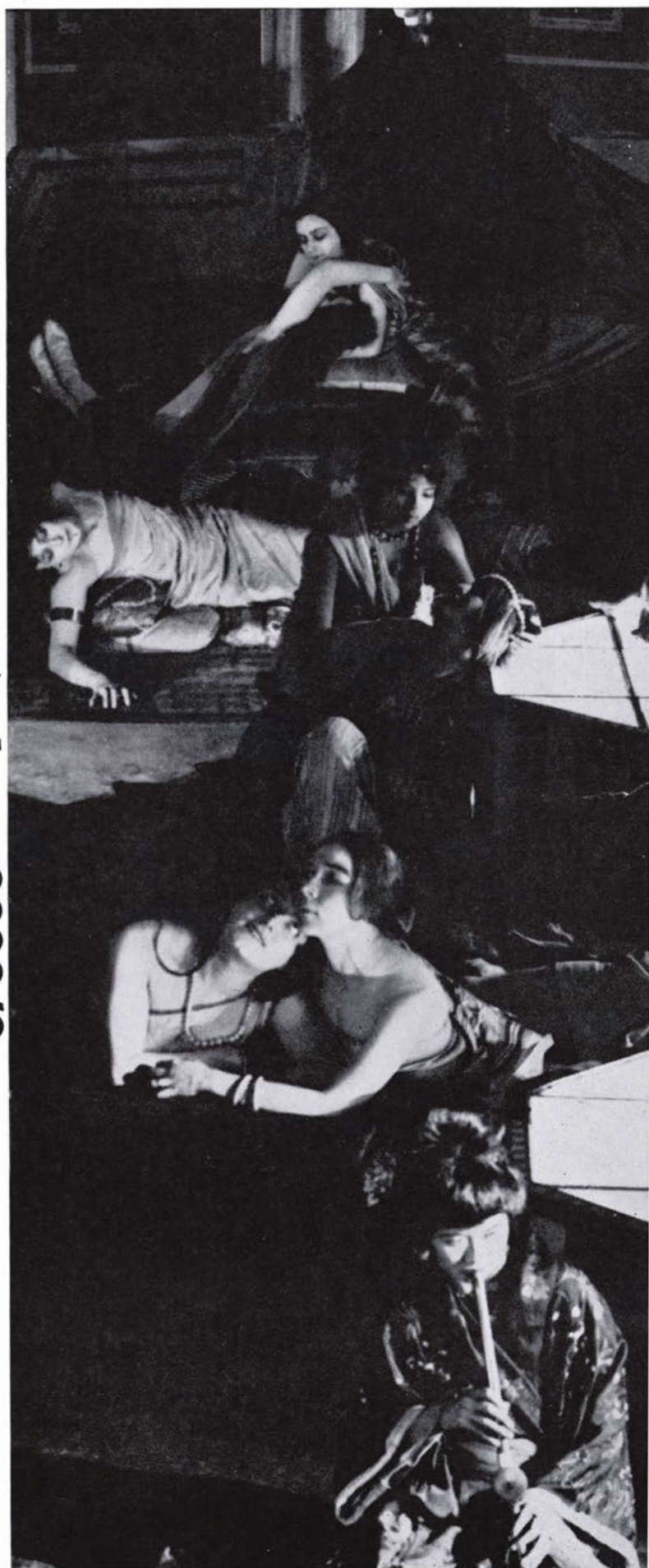
Films of special interest to *SIGHT AND SOUND* readers are denoted by one, two, three or four stars

- *BOCCACCIO 70** (Fox) Visconti (fairly on form) and De Sica and Fellini (fairly off) provide a three-episode film whose title hints at a determined sauciness. Pretty much a package movie, with nothing quite living up to the names on the box, though the Visconti section should be seen. (Sophia Loren, Anita Ekberg, Romy Schneider. Eastman Colour.)
- COME BLOW YOUR HORN** (Paramount) Lavish comedy about a stormy-tempered Jewish papa, whose elder son is finally persuaded into marriage while the younger one takes over the dissipation. More slick than schmaltzy, but fairly predictable all the same. (Frank Sinatra, Tony Bill, Lee J. Cobb; director, Bud Yorkin. Technicolor, Panavision.)
- *DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES** (Warner-Pathé) Cautionary tale about a PR man and his wife, both sinking deeper and deeper into alcoholism. Blake Edwards has some fun with the early scenes, but long before the end the film, like the drinking, has got out of control. (Jack Lemmon, Lee Remick, Charles Bickford.)
- ***DIVORCE—ITALIAN STYLE** (Fox) Marcello Mastroianni as a Sicilian nobleman who goes to extreme lengths to dispose of his wife. Extravagant comedy, black-edged, fantastically, often very funny. (Daniela Rocca, Stefania Sandrelli; director, Pietro Germi.)
- **DONOVAN'S REEF** (Paramount) John Ford off on a South Seas jaunt, with John Wayne and Lee Marvin slugging it out in the bar, new girl Elizabeth Allen standing up gamely to duckings and scoldings, and Dorothy Lamour standing by. Often outrageous; often enjoyable. (Technicolor.) *Reviewed.*
- *55 DAYS AT PEKING** (Rank) Story of the Boxer Rebellion and siege of the Peking legations, rethought by Samuel Bronston, Nicholas Ray and Philip Yordan as a U.N. allegory. Chinese court and British embassy share the English actors; Charlton Heston and Ava Gardner stand in for the great powers. Fine fireworks. (David Niven, Flora Robson. Technicolor, Technirama 70.)
- ***FREAKS** (Balch Films) First showing in this country of Tod Browning's 1932 classic, a horror film involving real freaks. Bizarre, tender and surprisingly moving. (Wallace Ford, Leila Hyams, Olga Baclanova.) *Reviewed.*
- GAY PURR-EE** (Warner-Pathé) Full-length UPA cat cartoon, with simple Mewsette rescued by honest Jaune Tom from the clutches of wily schemers Meowrice and Mme. Rubens-Chatte. Some pastiche effects (Lautrec, Van Gogh, etc.), and Judy Garland and Hermione Gingold on the sound track, but design and cat-characterisation both sketchy. (Director, Abe Levitow. Technicolor.)
- GREAT ESCAPE, THE** (United Artists) A three-hour compendium of every situation known to the escaping P.O.W. drama, complete with Richard Attenborough murmuring "I've never been happier" before being mown down by the Gestapo. The handful of American actors (Steve McQueen, Charles Bronson) effortlessly steal the film from the British regiments. (James Garner, James Donald, Donald Pleasence; director, John Sturges. DeLuxe Color, Panavision.)
- HEAVENS ABOVE!** (BLC/British Lion) Aimless, pea-shooting, Boulting Brothers' satire against the church. Peter Sellers excellent as a parson who takes his Christianity literally. A host of favourite character actors are thoughtfully provided to cement the craters. (Cecil Parker, Isabel Jeans, Eric Sykes.)
- *HOW THE WEST WAS WON** (M-G-M/Cinerama) Bulging with stars and shivering at the seams, the first Cinerama story film mixes eye-catching spectacle with slabs of static narrative. Ford's Civil War sequence comes closest to taming the giant screen. (Debbie Reynolds, James Stewart, Carroll Baker; directors, Henry Hathaway, John Ford, George Marshall. Technicolor.)
- ***HUD** (Paramount) Martin Ritt's best for a long time and a stinging evocation of modern Texas, though it labours things a little before the finish. Melvyn Douglas surprisingly convinces as an upright old-style cattleman, and Paul Newman as his roustabout son has never been better. Striking black and white camerawork by Wong Howe. (Patricia Neal, Brandon de Wilde. Panavision.) *Reviewed.*
- INTERNS, THE** (BLC/Columbia) Young doctor steals drug to end girlfriend's pregnancy by another man; another falls in love with Eurasian girl suffering from incurable disease; a third conducts an affair with a not-too-young but influential nurse. Ben Casey and Dr. Kildare have nothing on these interns. (Cliff Robertson, Michael Callan, James MacArthur; director, David Swift.)
- **LAWRENCE OF ARABIA** (BLC/Columbia) David Lean, Sam Spiegel and Robert Bolt's massive reconstruction of the desert campaigns. Impeccably academic direction and a genuine response to the setting, but the whole thing has rather the air of a blockbuster in search of a hero. (Peter O'Toole, Alec Guinness, Jack Hawkins, Anthony Quinn. Technicolor, Super Panavision 70.)
- ***LEOPARD, THE** (Fox) Visconti's long and loving version of Lampedusa's novel is a masterpiece of decorative splendour, which will be enough for most people. Others may find the director's formalism irons out the characters too dispassionately. No reservations possible, however, about the colour photography. (Burt Lancaster, Alain Delon, Claudia Cardinale. Technicolor, Technirama.)
- *LONGEST DAY, THE** (Fox) Solemnly spectacular reconstruction of the D-Day invasion of Europe. A host of stars—American, British, French and German—appear fleetingly, but with Darryl Zanuck as commander in chief, only a handful get hurt. (Directors, Ken Annakin, Andrew Marton, Bernhard Wicki. CinemaScope.)
- MOUSE ON THE MOON, THE** (United Artists) Ingenious comic fantasy, a sequel to *The Mouse that Roared*, with Grand Fenwick fuelling its rockets on local wine and racing the great powers to the moon. A full roster of British comedy talent does what it can for the jokes. (Margaret Rutherford, Bernard Cribbins, Terry-Thomas; director, Richard Lester. Eastman Colour.)
- MURDER AT THE GALLOP** (M-G-M) Margaret Rutherford, as endearing as ever, again in full cry as Agatha Christie's Miss Marple, domineering a riding-school, doing the Twist, and solving a murder. Vehicle a bit tinny, but star well on top of it. (Robert Morley, Flora Robson; director, George Pollock.)
- *MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY** (M-G-M) Directionless, in every sense, remake of Frank Lloyd's old film. Trevor Howard makes Bligh a believably obsessed, class-conscious puritan; Brando's Fletcher Christian rocks the boat with an often funny but over-indulgent impression of an aristocratic fop. (Richard Harris; director, Lewis Milestone. Technicolor, Ultra Panavision 70.)
- ***NAZARIN** (Contemporary) The first of Buñuel's recent trio of masterpieces, a bit overshadowed already by *Viridiana* and *The Exterminating Angel*, but still ferocious in its account of a young Mexican priest trying to live as a modern Christ. (Francisco Rabal, Marga Lopez, Rita Macedo.)
- RUSSIAN ROUNDABOUT** (Circolorama Theatres) Russian version of Circolorama involving eleven screens situated all round the theatre, with accompanying stereophonic sound. First programme merely a half-hour circular travelogue, for spectators with eyes in the back of their heads.
- ***SALVATORE GIULIANO** (Gala) Not a biography of the bandit, but a study of the Sicily in which he flourished. Magnificent use of locations, and intricate jigsaw puzzle structure worked out with extreme control to indicate which pieces are still historically missing. (Frank Wolff, Salvo Randone; director, Francesco Rosi.) *Reviewed.*
- *SMALL WORLD OF SAMMY LEE, THE** (BLC/British Lion) Smart alec Sammy compères a strip club and owes £300 to a bookie threatening him with the razor. *A tour de force* by Anthony Newley on the run in the candid-camera streets of Soho. (Julia Foster, Robert Stephens; director, Ken Hughes.)
- STEPPA, LA** (Gala) Based on a Chekov story, Lattuada's account of a small boy's journey across the steppe to the big city has a certain innocence, though marred by the way sensationalism keeps breaking in. (Charles Vanel, Marina Vlady, Daniele Spallone. Technicolor, Totalscope.)
- STORY OF THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO, THE** (Warner-Pathé) Edmond Dantes rides again, rather stiffly this time. Directed by Autant-Lara, but as the film has been cut by half its length, you wouldn't notice. (Louis Jourdan, Yvonne Furneaux. Technicolor, Dyaliscope.)
- SUMMER MAGIC** (Disney) Another Disney game of happy families, with Hayley Mills spreading sunshine in a Maine village. Sharper and less sticky than might be expected. (Burl Ives, Dorothy McGuire; director, James Neilson. Technicolor.)
- TARAS BULBA** (United Artists) Yul Brynner, bald again, on the Russian Steppes. Not much Gogol, but lots of violence and Tony Curtis. (Christine Kaufmann, Sam Wanamaker; director, J. Lee Thompson. Eastman Colour, Panavision.)
- THREE FABLES OF LOVE, THE** (Gala) Another three-director exercise (Blasetti, Clair, Hervé Bromberger) and a rather studied attempt to inject a little twentieth-century sex into La Fontaine. A dubbed Monica Vitti, an English-speaking Leslie Caron and a French-speaking Anna Karina, all somewhat at a loss. (Rossano Brazzi, Charles Aznavour.)
- **TOUT L'OR DU MONDE** (Connoisseur) René Clair's fable about building speculators threatening to bring the delights of modern life to a tranquil village, but foiled by a canny peasant family all played by Bourvil. Old-fashioned, but likeably so, with the master hand showing in some neatly turned jokes. (Philippe Noiret, Claude Rich.) *Reviewed.*
- ***TWO DAUGHTERS** (Contemporary) Satyajit Ray's tribute to Tagore, in stories of postmaster and orphan pupil, and young student and recalcitrant bride. Beautiful balance between humour and observation, with all the jokes absolutely rooted in character. (Anil Chatterji, Soumitra Chatterji, Aparna Das Gupta.)
- UGLY AMERICAN, THE** (Rank) Marlon Brando as U.S. ambassador to a South East Asian state, who finally learns the difference between neutralist (by now pro-American, and dead) and Communist. Politically naive fable, often disconcertingly off target. (Eiji Okada, Pat Hingle; director, George Englund. Technicolor Print.)
- **WEST SIDE STORY** (United Artists) Strikingly mounted version of the Broadway musical which fails to bridge the gap between realistic backgrounds and Hollywood social rage, between dramatic dancing and tired echoes of Romeo and Juliet. Fine playing by George Chakiris, Richard Beymer and Rita Moreno. (Natalie Wood, Russ Tamblyn; directors, Robert Wise, Jerome Robbins. Technicolor, Panavision 70.)
- *WINTER LIGHT** (Gala) Bergman's theological supplement to *Through a Glass Darkly*, involving priestly loss of faith, eczema, God's silence and tormented sex. Beautifully acted, impeccably photographed, but quite, quite empty. (Ingrid Thulin, Gunnar Björnstrand, Max von Sydow.) *Reviewed.*
- YELLOW CANARY, THE** (Fox) Pat Boone playing tough as an unlovable pop singer who comes to his senses and takes to his gun when his child is kidnapped. Distinctly ragged at the edges. (Barbara Eden, Steve Forrest; director, Buzz Kulik.)



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waterloo 3232/3

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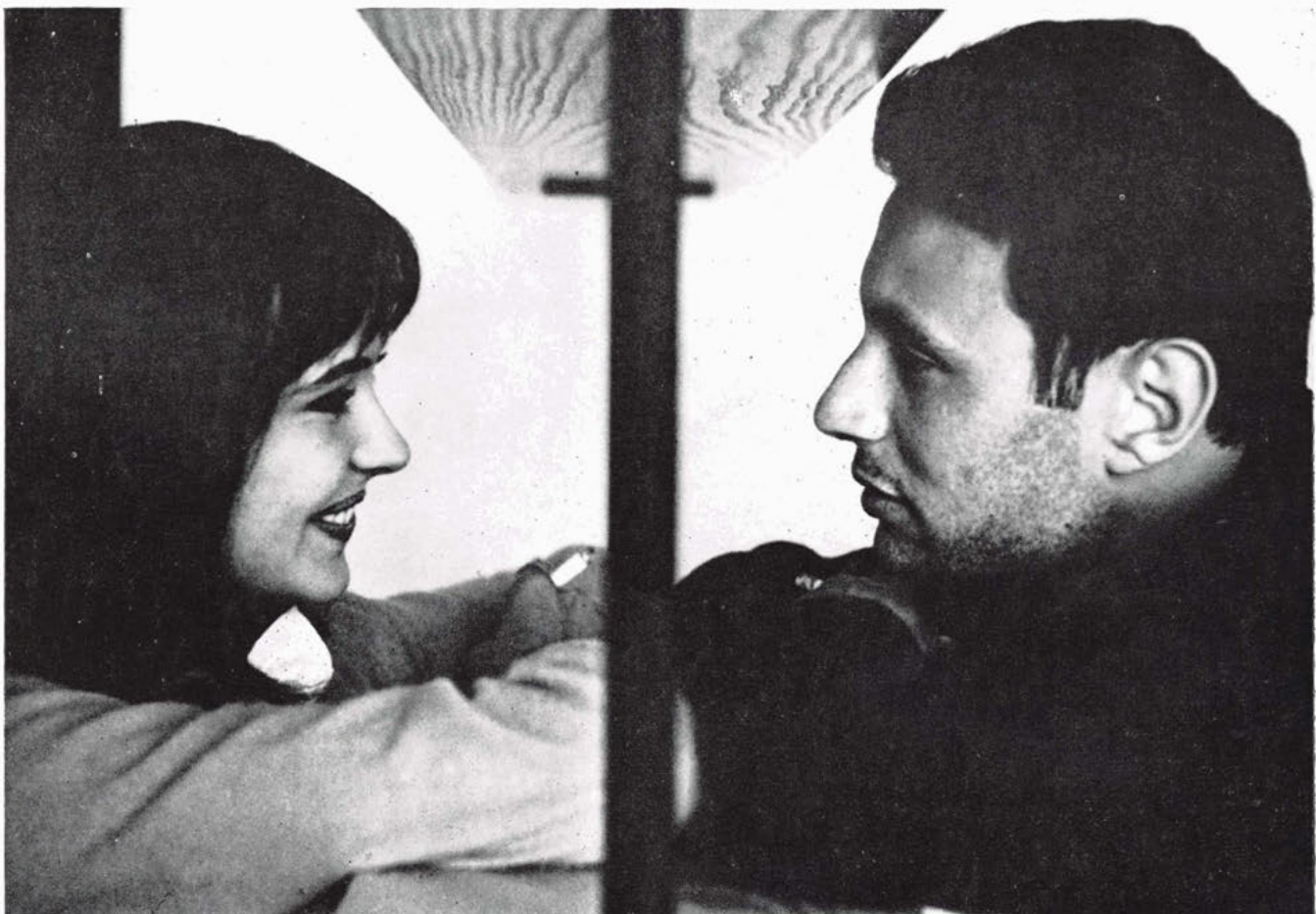
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